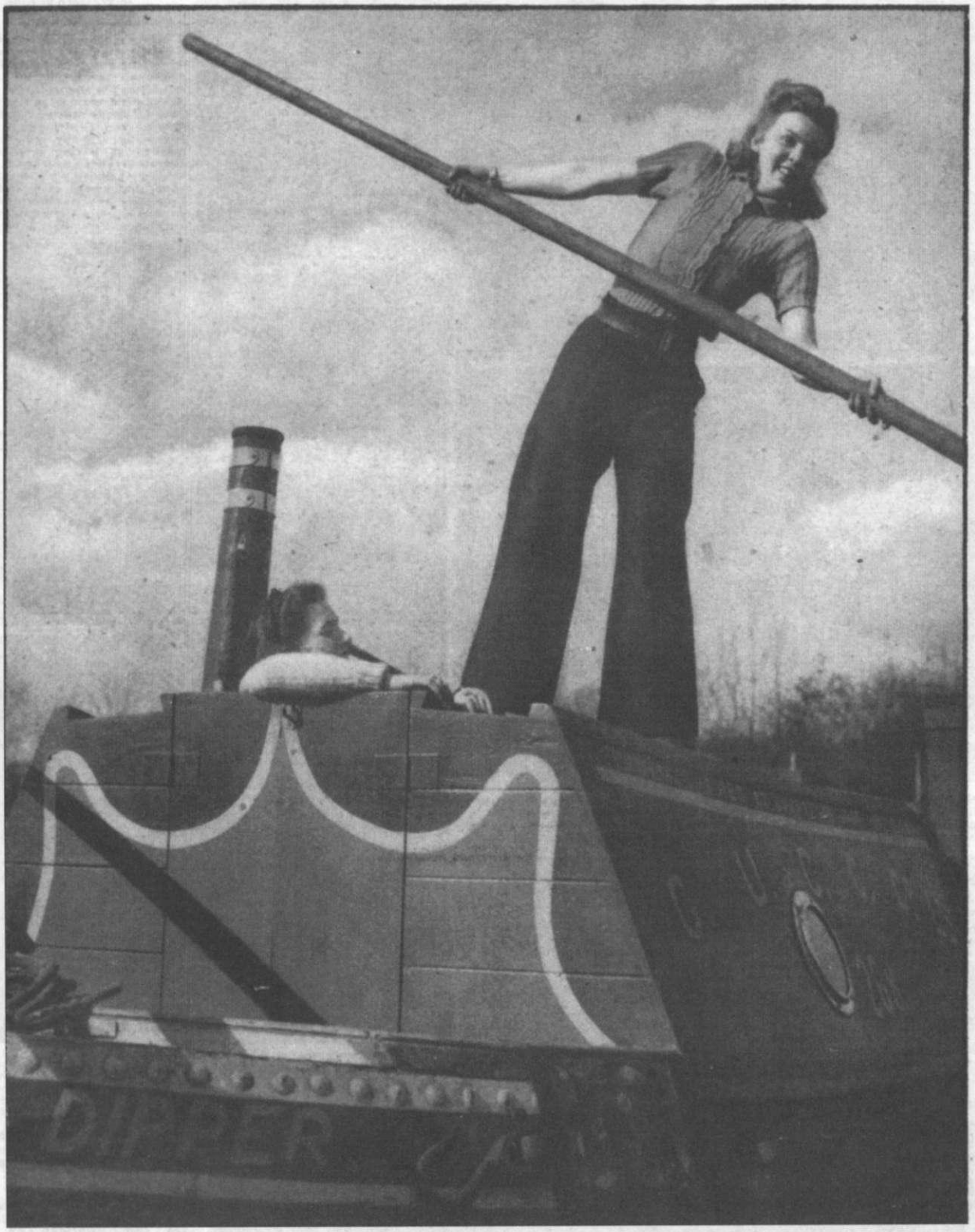
Vol 7 **The War Illustrated** N° 179

SIXPENCE — Edited by Sir John Hammerton — APRIL 28, 1944



HANDLING HER BOAT-HOOK like a professional bargee is this girl now training under a Ministry of War Transport scheme designed to make still greater use of our inland waterways for carrying vital supplies when the Allied Western offensive opens. Barges work in pairs, with a crew of three each; six pairs of boats on regular runs are now operated by women. An average round trip takes 16 days, and crews sometimes work a 16-hour day. *Photo, Associated Press*

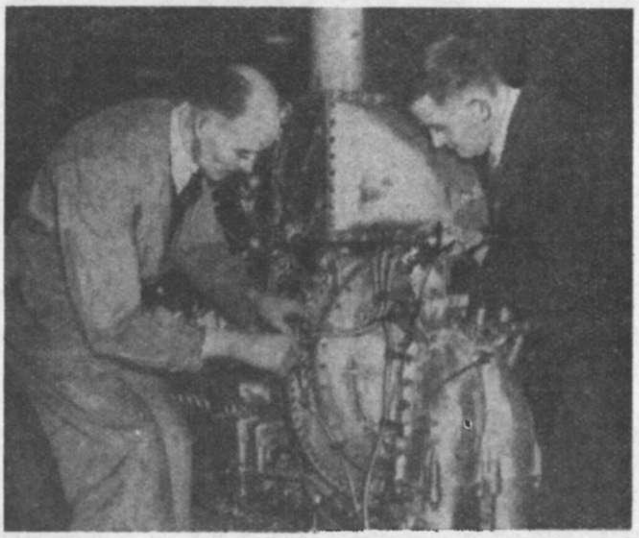
NO. 180 WILL BE PUBLISHED FRIDAY, MAY 12

A Homeland Tour With Our Roving Camera

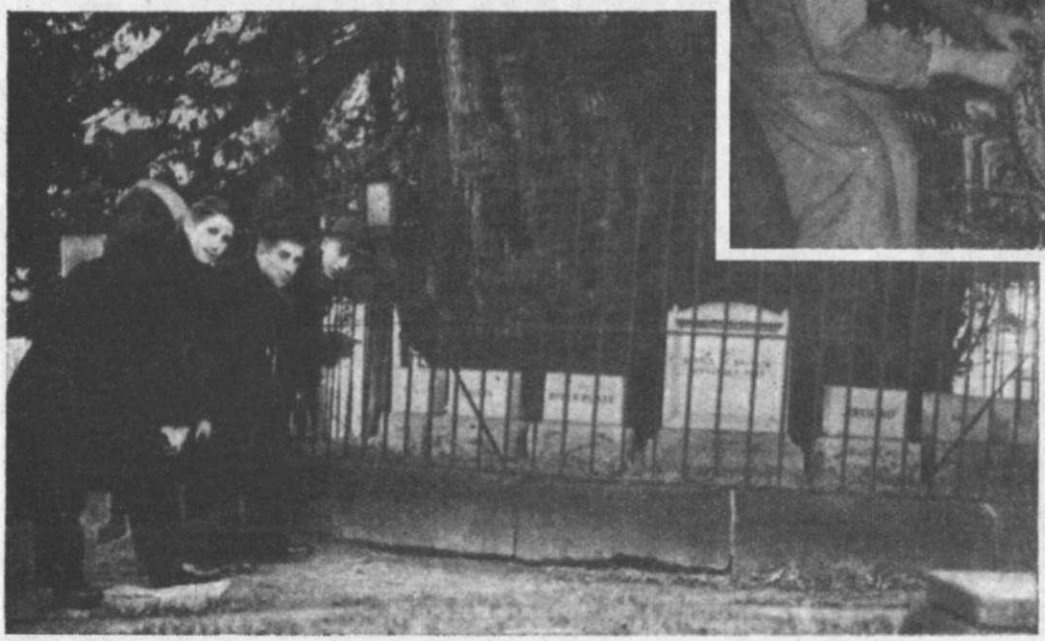
VISITING TROOPS in Yorkshire, our indefatigable Prime Minister, during a recent extensive tour, inspected an armoured formation and took keen interest in a tank demonstration. He is seen (left) driving in a half-track car along a line of Sherman tanks and their crews—all impatient for action in Western Europe.

BRITAIN'S LATEST TANK, the Centaur (below), incorporating new features, has recently been taken off the secret list, though doubtless the enemy is well enough acquainted with it and is regretting its appearance at the battle fronts. It is a cruiser tank, mounting a 6-pdr. gun and described as having a three-man turret. The average British cruiser tank's weight is 14-17 tons, and speed 25-40 miles per hour, the crew numbering four or five. Armament of earlier cruiser types was usually a 2-pdr. gun.

IDENTITY CARD CHECK-UP by police is to ensure that new coastal area restrictions, imposed early in April 1944 for operational security reasons, are complied with. Everyone over 16 in the "regulated" areas must be able to produce their card to any constable or member of the Allied forces on duty.



THE 100,000th Rolls-Royce Merlin aero engine is being finished off (above) by two workers who have had many years service with the firm; they helped to build the first Rolls-Royce engine ever produced. Now the most famous in the world, the Merlin has been fitted to 14 different types of operational aircraft.



FAMOUS VICTORIES, such as the Battle of Britain and of Malta, are commemorated by these tablets around the 36-foot base of the famous yew tree (left), reputed to be 2,000 years old, in the 12th-century St. Helen's Churchyard, in Darley Dale, Derbyshire.

Photos, British Official; Planet News, Fox, F. H. Brindley

THE BATTLE FRONTS

by E. Royston Pike

ITALY In the encyclopedias Cassino's claim to fame is the possession of a Benedictine monastery founded by St. Benedict himself in A.D. 529. In the history books of the future, however, Cassino will have a place because of the furious and bloody battles that were waged in and about it during the spring months of 1944.

By the middle of January the massive rock on which the monastery was perched, and the town in the valley below, had come within range of the 5th Army's guns. Regardless of the fact that Cassino was one of the holy places of the Catholic world—why, indeed, should the exponents of German paganism have concern for such sentimental trifles?—the Nazis made the monastery hill and its surroundings one huge strongpoint, scored with trenches and gun-pits and tunnelled through with galleries in which men and guns might lie hidden, out of reach of bomb and shell.

The first attempt to take the place by flanking movements and by frontal assault failed. The general opinion of men on the spot seems to have been that the occupation by the enemy of the monastery as an observation post was largely responsible for the failure of the Allied operations; and at length, but only after prolonged deliberation and much discussion of the right and wrong of bombing so holy a place (during which time many valuable lives were lost), the word was given to bomb. On February 15 much of the monastery was blown to bits. But the bombs had little if any effect on its value to the enemy, and the battle continued, rising to a fresh pitch of violence.

A MONTH after the monastery's formidable walls it was the turn of the town to be bombed. "Between breakfast and lunch today," wrote Christopher Buckley, Special Correspondent of The Daily Telegraph, on March 15, "in brilliant weather, I saw Cassino flattened from the air by persistent, almost ceaseless bombing over a space of four hours . . . The bombing, intended to reduce the German strongpoints to rubble, was followed by a terrific artillery barrage from massed Allied guns, after which the infantry went forward to the assault." It was a terrible and impressive display. Never in the whole history of war had a more intense load of bombs been put on to so small a target; and to the observers watching from a hillside two miles away nearly all the bombing seemed to be of remarkable accuracy. (See illus. p. 709.)

Later it was discovered that only something in the neighbourhood of 40 per cent of the bombs had fallen within the target area—and this in bright sunshine, with practically no opposition—and the artillery bombardment was also ineffective in crushing the enemy powers of resistance. As soon as the guns ceased and the infantry moved forward, "from the rubble (reported Christopher Buckley) machine-gunners sprang to life. From caves and tunnels on the hillside, many of them prepared or enlarged during the week's lull caused by the weather which had prevented air operations, the enemy emerged. They came from the cellars of houses in front of and behind our advancing infantry. Three-quarters or more of Cassino was cleared; and then, with the impetus of our attack partly lost, the enemy began to counter-attack."

So once more on that blasted mountainside there was failure. Why? asked Buckley; and answered his own question. We overestimated the probable effects of air-bombing: because half the town had been blotted out it was fallaciously assumed that the garrison was either dead or demoralized. (In fact, many of them survived, and the prisoners taken were reported to be still "fighting fit.") Then there was the intensely heavy rain on the following night preventing the attack on Monastery Hill developing with its full force. Finally, the German parachute troops forming the garrison put up an extremely tough resistance, as determined as anything we have met with so far in this war.

What, then, ought to have been done? Should the bombing have been more intensive, delivered by even more planes than the 500-odd that were engaged? Scarcely, since

DRIVING ON IN RUMANIA, Russian troops were by April 12, 1944, five miles east of Jassy, dominating the road to the Galatz Gap and the Ploesti oilfields; they were also hammering at the Tolgyes Pass in the Carpathians.
By courtesy of News Chronicle

"the heavier the bomb load you put down in advance the more you obstruct the subsequent advance of your own forces." As it was, the craters in Cassino were so numerous that only two tanks were able to get into the town on the day of the assault; and a town that has been laid in ruins is a hardly less formidable obstacle than one in which every house in a street is a potential machine-gun nest. Perhaps, then, more infantry ought to have been employed? (*Better* troops could hardly have been put into the battle, since the New Zealanders were there in force.) But Christopher Buckley scouted the view that reversion to the Somme tactics of the last war, mass infantry assaults following gigantic bombardments, represents the solution of Cassino's problem.

RUSSIA As March drew to a close the Russians surged on with hardly a check. All along the vast front from just south of the Pripet marshes, opposite Lwow, to the estuary of the Bug at Nikolayev, the German armies under Manstein and Kleist were engulfed or swept away or pushed back by the flood of Russian tanks and apparently inexhaustible hosts of men.

In the north Marshal Zhukov's 1st Ukrainian Front smashed the German lines in and about Tarnopol and developed a threat to Lwow. On March 19 Moscow's guns saluted the capture of Kremenets; and in the next four days the Russians made an advance of 40 to 60 miles to reach the Dniester at Zaleschiki, some 63 miles south of Tarnopol. Crossing the river they roared on to the Pruth. Cernauti (Czernowitz) was their primary objective; and on March 30 they were fighting their way through the suburbs of this, the chief town of Bukovina. At the same time they stormed Kolomyja, 45 miles to the north-west, on the upper reaches of the Pruth; and very shortly a great stretch of the river's eastern bank was in Russian hands. Here Zhukov's men were in the foothills of the Carpathians; and at night the peaks of the whole mountain chain were reported to be ablaze with beacons lighted by the guerillas to guide their liberators by little-known tracks through the difficult countryside.

SENSATIONAL as was the advance of the 1st Ukrainian Front, it was paralleled, perhaps surpassed, by their comrades of the 2nd Ukrainian Front under Marshal Koniev. In a week the Russians in this sector covered a hundred miles from Uman, reached the Dniester and crossed it on a broad front. Bessarabia became a battlefield as with swift, savage thrusts Koniev drove across the lowlands separating the Dniester from the Pruth. There he linked up with Zhukov on his right; and together the two great Red Army groups crossed yet another river which only the strategists had thought to be a grave obstacle in the Russians' path. Pontoons brought up by the marvellous supply trains, boats of every description, barrels, doors, bundles of reeds—everything and anything was used to get the men across. Their élan was terrific. The Germans, battered and bewildered, hastened westward.

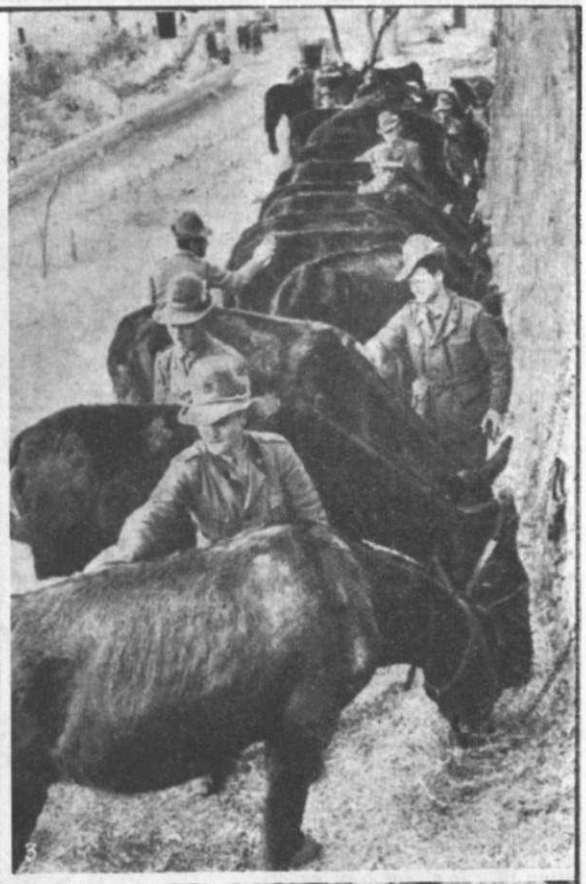
Meanwhile, Malinovsky's 3rd Ukrainian Front had been fighting its way through Nikolayev (captured on March 28) towards the Black Sea shore to within little more than 20 miles of Odessa. On April 2 great columns of smoke rising from the city spoke of German attempts to destroy their stores and installations before the Russians pierced their defences. The city fell on April 10.

RUMANIA proper was invaded on April 2; that night Mr. Molotov, Soviet Foreign Commissar, issued a warning to the Rumanians that the Red Army would pursue their troops until they should decide to abandon the Germans who had brought upon them such disasters and humiliations. Russia sought no territorial conquests nor did she seek to make social changes in Rumania; but she would continue the war until the enemy's complete rout and capitulation.

Historians and novelists have found in Napoleon's retreat from Moscow a theme calculated to arouse their utmost powers of description. For all we know, there may be some new Tolstoy in the ranks of the Russians pursuing Hitler's shattered legions; but as yet we must rely upon tantalizingly scrappy accounts of what is beyond a doubt one of the greatest events of the present century.

But in imagination we may stand amongst the wondering peasantry on the Rumanian pathways, watching a ragged and wearied horde, sweating and swearing, caked with dust, with bloodshot eyes, wounds bandaged with dirty rags, some without boots, but many carrying bags of loot, pouring along the same roads down which in 1941 the German army had marched so confidently, so cheerfully, so gloriously, to smash the Russian army and state. What the winter's snows did to Napoleon's Grande Armée, the armoured might and native valour of Stalin's Russia have done to Hitler's war machine.

Interludes of War on the Main 5th Army Front



REST AND RELAXATION are provided for some of our men on the main 5th Army front in Italy by a mobile tented "circus" controlled by the Expeditionary Force Institute, as the N.A.A.F.I. is known overseas; in a barber's tent (1) they enjoy their first comfortable hair-cut for weeks. To our forward infantry frequent change of socks is vital to good health; at a battalion H.Q. hours are spent washing and darning them (2). Pack mules which carry supplies to 5th Army forward positions are tended by Italian soldiers (3). On their way to firing positions at Cassino Sherman tanks cross a repaired bridge (4). Keeping in touch with New Zealand, Indian and British troops on the hills above Cassino are these field radio operators (5).

Photos, British Official; Associated Press, Planet News

No Rest for the Westward-Driven Wehrmacht

LED BY RUSSIA'S ABLEST COMMANDER, Marshal Zhukov (2), the 1st Ukrainian Army reached the frontier of Czechoslovakia on April 8, 1944. Columns of retreating Nazis head westwards on a snow-covered Russian road (1); lacking adequate motor transport, the Germans make use of horse-drawn vehicles, and across the Pripet River enemy troops are evacuated in rubber dinghies (3). A shell (4) is raised into the breech of a Soviet long-range gun on the White Russian front (5) to batter a distant position.

Photos, Keystone, Pictorial Press

THE WAR AT SEA

by **Francis E. McMurtrie**

SINCE she was disabled by torpedoes from British midget submarines last September, little had been heard of Germany's largest warship, the 45,000-ton Tirpitz. It had been reported from Swedish sources that other vessels were constantly alongside her, presumably engaged in the patching of the damage. To effect more than temporary repairs to so large a ship would be impossible without putting her in dry dock; and there is no dry dock big enough to take her nearer than Kiel.

In March the Hamburg-Südamerika liner Monte Rosa, of 14,000 tons gross, was reported to be in Kaafjord, the inlet at the farther end of Altenfjord where the Tirpitz has been lying for many months past. On March 30 the Monte Rosa sailed for Germany taking with her, it is suspected, the salvage equipment and skilled workmen who had been engaged in making the battleship ready for sea. On her way south, not far from the Norwegian port of Stavanger, the Monte Rosa was attacked by Beaufighters of the Coastal Command. She was torpedoed twice, the second attack being made after midnight, March 31-April 1, by units of a New Zealand air squadron. Though the ultimate result could not be observed, there is no doubt the liner was sunk.

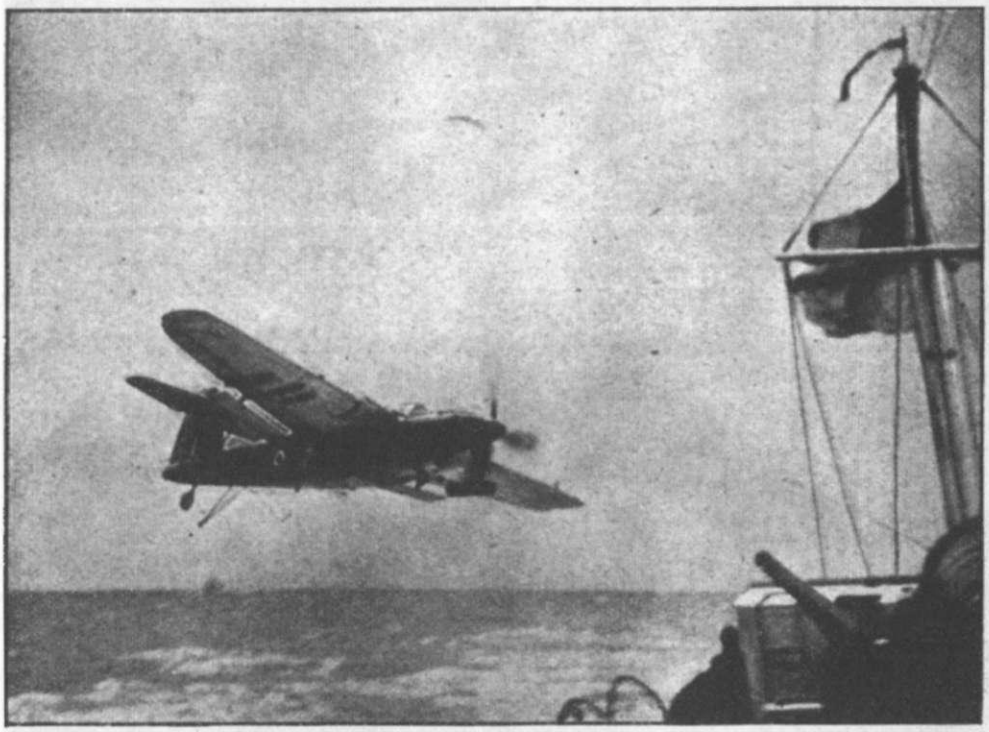
AFTER the departure of the Monte Rosa, the Tirpitz prepared to follow her. As she was about to get under way, towards dawn on April 3, successive attacks were made on her by two forces of Barracuda aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm, flying from carriers of the Home Fleet. These carriers were supported by other ships under Vice-Admiral Sir Henry Moore, the second-in-command of the Home Fleet.

In the first attack the Tirpitz was hit by heavy and medium-sized bombs at points near the bridge, amidships, and forward; in the second, an hour later, hits were scored near the after turret, amidships and on the forecastle. Sixteen bombs struck her in all. Large explosions were seen near the mainmast and on the forecastle. Anti-aircraft fire was met from the Tirpitz and from shore batteries throughout the operation, but when the last aircraft went in, the battleship had stopped firing. When last seen the Tirpitz was on fire amidships.

A GERMAN account of the operation alleges that 16 British aircraft were brought down, a gross exaggeration. In fact, only three Barracuda bombers and one fighter failed to return to the carriers, a low price to pay for the disablement of the enemy's most important fighting ship. A further enemy claim to have sunk 14 British escort vessels may also be regarded as a ludicrous falsehood.

Swedish reports suggest that the Tirpitz incurred some 300 casualties, which may well be true, since she was apparently engaged in unmooring ship, and would therefore be likely to have her full complement on board with many of them on the upper deck. Though it is improbable that injuries sufficient to prevent the ship from steaming can have been inflicted, it may be assumed that the gunnery control system was put out of action, and other serious damage done that would reduce her fighting power very considerably.

This is the first time that Barracuda aircraft have taken part in an operation of first class importance, though it is known that they have been coming into service with the Fleet Air Arm for some time past. This new type can be used for either bombing or torpedo attack, as well as for reconnaissance, or gunnery spotting. In the present case it seems probable that dive-bombing was the method employed, for not only would the cliffs of the Altenfjord interfere with high level bombing, but the latter form of attack could scarcely have produced so many hits.



A BARRACUDA, the new Fleet Air Arm torpedo-bomber, is here seen flying across a destroyer's stern. A perfectly timed surprise attack by Barracudas, on April 3, 1944, left Germany's sole remaining capital ship, the 45,000-ton Tirpitz, ablaze in Altenfjord. The Tirpitz was also the target, in Sept. 1943, of our midget submarines **(see p. 649).** *Photo, British Official*

Escorting fighters included Seafires (a naval variety of the famous Spitfire), Corsairs, Hellcats and Wildcats, the three latter being of American build and design, though flown by British naval airmen.

It is just four years since the last successful dive-bombing attack was delivered by British naval aircraft against a German warship in Norwegian waters. On April 9, 1940, the cruiser Königsberg was sunk in Bergen harbour by Skua aircraft.

Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser has received congratulations from the King and from the Prime Minister on the success of this operation. Since he became Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet a year ago the Tirpitz has been put out of action twice; her consort, the battleship Scharnhorst, has been sunk; and a number of convoys have been escorted to North Russia without serious loss.

It may be questioned whether the Tirpitz will ever see Germany again. Should Finland drop out of the war, as seems probable, the German grip on North Norway will soon have to be relinquished, and if the great battleship cannot be brought away she may have to be scuttled, like the Admiral Graf Spee in the River Plate in 1939.

RESERVES for Drafting to New U-Boats

Germany's few remaining surface warships comprise the dismantled battleship Gneisenau, which can be written off for practical purposes; the two "pocket battleships," Lützow and Admiral Scheer; and six cruisers, the Admiral Hipper, Prinz Eugen, Nürnberg, Leipzig, Köln and Emden. There is also the aircraft carrier Graf Zeppelin, but she has never been to sea. All of these are believed to be in the Baltic, where their inactivity gives rise to the suspicion that their complements are being used as a reserve from which officers and men can be drafted to man new U-boats commissioned to replace the heavy casualties of the past fifteen months.

IN the Pacific the tide continues to run strongly against the Japanese. It is considered that some 100,000 Japanese troops in New Guinea, New Britain, New Ireland, the Admiralty group, and Bougainville have been abandoned to their fate by the High Command in Tokyo. It is merely a question of time before all of them are wiped out or left to starve, in the absence of reinforcements and supplies. Occupation of more and more of the various groups of islands lying to the northward make more remote any prospect of relief. Most of the Marshalls have now been taken by United States forces, leaving in enemy hands only four islands of any importance in this group.

FREQUENT attacks were made by the U.S. Pacific Fleet during March and April on atolls in the Caroline, Mariana and Palau groups. In the course of these operations, which included naval bombardments and air bombing, two Japanese destroyers and another warship were sunk, and a battleship was damaged by a torpedo from an American submarine.

The most important Japanese strongholds in these groups are Truk, Yap, Guam, Saipan, Tinian and Babelthuap. Of these, the last-named is distant only 600 miles from the Philippines, and if occupied by American troops and used as an airfield and naval base might prove a thorn in the side of the Japanese garrisons there. That this possibility is already causing alarm may be inferred from the fact that an air-raid warning is reported to have been given in Manila, capital of the Philippines, early in April.

Pontoons Linked Landing Craft with Kwajalein

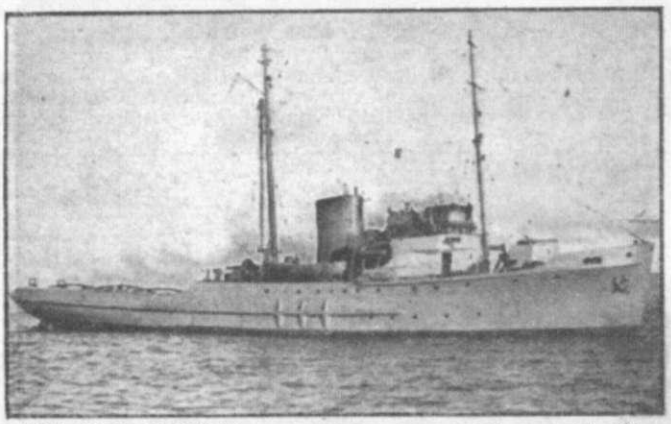
SEA TOO SHALLOW FOR LANDING CRAFT assailing Kwajalein, in the Marshall Islands in the Pacific, on January 31, 1944, was bridged by sectional pontoons, across which U.S. troops poured to beat the Japanese. Transport of bulky pontoon components, of which there are several types, and speedy assembly at the spot required is the concern of Army engineers ; to the labours of the latter, under fire, spectacular triumphs of the fighting men not infrequently are due. See also illus. p. 660.

Photo, New York Times Photos

Little Rescue Tugs are Winning Big Victories

In accordance with traditions of the great Silent Service, the tug fleet of the Royal Navy pursues its work of saving stricken ships and their cargoes with the minimum of talk. Seldom do the achievements of the men who so daringly serve aboard these craft come to light : the following account, by HOWARD JOHNS, is therefore of especial interest. See also facing page.

FOR reasons of security little is ever said of the great work being carried out by salvage tugs of the Royal Navy. One chance word might give the enemy a line to work upon and result in our losing a valuable ship, trained seamen, and a cargo worth thousands of pounds. Thus the "little tough guys" of the sea work hard and often, in fair weather and foul, with even less praise than is bestowed upon other branches of the Senior Service.



H.M. TUG GROWLER, ocean-going rescue vessel, powered with Diesel engines, has a cruising endurance of over 50 days. Her sleek build is specially designed to withstand the roughest weather. All tugs are armed in wartime as protection against enemy interference with their rescue work. *Photo, British Official*

Under the command of Captain C. Walcott, C.B.E., Captain-in-Charge Rescue Tugs, some of the greatest sea victories of this war are being won. Not only are the men of the tugs fighting a ruthless enemy, the elements also sometimes seem to side with the Germans. But by reason of grim determination and tremendous skill they seldom know defeat. Scores of Allied ships claimed by the enemy as sunk by either submarine or air attack have reached port and been repaired, thanks to our quick-thinking tug skippers.

Before the war Holland specialized in salvage work and owned a fleet of tugs that were in great demand. Many, I am told, came to this country when Hitler invaded Holland. Since 1940 the tug fleet of the Royal Navy has been developed and many new units added to the sturdy "toughs," including the 16 knot Brigand type with 3,000 h.p. engines. When things were very black, America sent over tugs to assist our hard-pressed fleet ; one of them starred in the famous film Tugboat Annie. When the film had been completed the tug was sunk ; she was refloated to come to our aid and has been very successful off the East Coast of England, especially in "E-Boat Alley."

THE men of the tugs come from the ports around Britain, from the large and the small rivers. The last few years have blended them into a perfect team, and in the course of extensive travel rarely have I met a happier set of men than those who serve aboard the tugs. One of the best-known leaders is Lieut.-Commander Harold Osbourne, O.B.E., R.N.R., Senior Master of Tugs. In the last four years at sea he has salvaged 40,000 tons of shipping and saved cargoes worth many thousands of pounds.

In the course of his valuable and daring work the Commander has had some unusual tows. For example, on one occasion he was sent out to the assistance of a Sunderland flying-boat believed to be in distress. He located the plane, as it was being tossed about by Atlantic waves. Quickly Lieut.-Commander Osbourne secured a "tow," and for 230 miles hauled the flying-boat back to port. Today it is once more on operational duty. On another occasion he towed back to base a tanker, the after-part of which was under water. His skill resulted in the saving of 10,000 gallons of petrol.

Another tug, the Samsonia, received a signal to go to the assistance of a "plane that is adrift." When he received the message the skipper was rather surprised—but orders are orders. Eventually he located the plane, a Lockheed bomber, lashed to a raft. Apparently it had been resting on the deck of a ship that had been torpedoed. Anyway, after three days of towing through heavy seas they reached Britain with the plane whose only damage was a dented nose.

Some of the cargoes saved by our tugs have been worth a small fortune. H.M.S. Dexterous, under the command of Sub-Lieutenant Ronald Fletcher, R.N.R., a thirty-year-old salvage expert, went 270 miles out into the Atlantic in heavy weather to the assistance of a vessel known to be carrying cargo essential to the war effort. And the Dexterous brought back to Britain a ship carrying a cargo worth £250,000.

ONE of the great salvage jobs of the war was completed by the tug H.M.S. Saucy. She towed a bottomless ship nearly 1,000 miles from Iceland to this country. The vessel had been on the rocks for nearly twelve months, but was still packed with a cargo. Temporary repairs were made and two tugs commenced the long haul to base. Bad weather was encountered and one of the tugs broke away. It was essential that the cargo should not roll, or the vessel would capsize. A signal was sent to the Saucy that the bulkheads were giving way. There was nothing to do but heave-to for the night while further temporary repairs were carried out.

"Waves were breaking over the cargo ship," said the C.O. of the Saucy, "and at times she was like a breakwater. They had to keep shoring up her decks, using nearly 1,000 feet of timber. At one time we had to pump 84 tons of precious oil on to the water to prevent the ship rolling. But we finished the job after one of the most exciting tasks I have had for years." Note the remark : "But we finished the job." That is a fact of which our tugs are justly proud, for they overcome very great difficulties to keep this record.

A typical example is the tug H.M.S. Bustler. Exchange of engine parts enabled her to bring a 14,000-ton merchant ship safely to port over miles of ocean. The Bustler was towing a bomb-damaged ship in the Mediterranean when she herself broke down. The merchant vessel had most of her stern missing and was drawing 52 ft. of water by the stern and 47 ft. by the head. Most of the time the tug was working on alternate engines. Then her engineer officer had an idea. The ship in tow had similar engines to those in the tug, so the merchantman was boarded, parts collected and exchanged, and adapted to the tug's engines. After that everything went according to plan ; when the Bustler reached port they had voyaged nearly 1,500 miles.

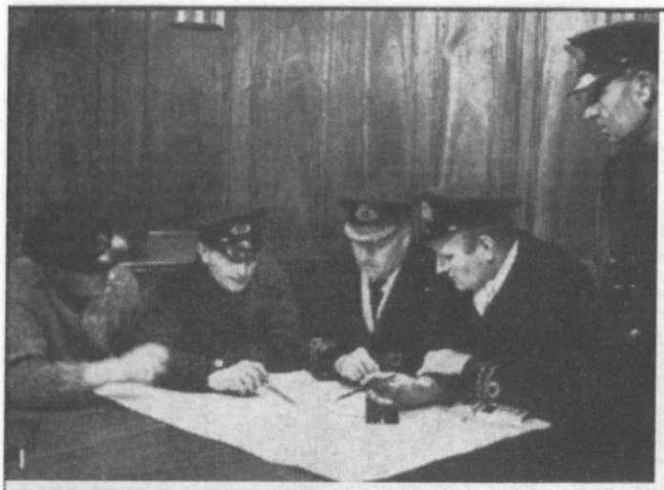
Sometimes failure to bring a stricken ship home is accompanied by immense credit to the rescue tug crew concerned, as when the effort has been truly tremendous. Witness, for example, the endeavour of the tug Stormking which tried so valiantly to bring to port the sloop H.M.S. Woodpecker—one of the five sloops which shared in the sinking of six U-boats (see p. 711). Crippled by a torpedo, the Woodpecker was towed for eight days, a distance of 600 miles, the last part of the way by the Stormking—only to capsize and sink in heavy weather, with her ensign flying, when 40 miles from land.

"IT was a bitter blow," said Lieut. L. Colmans, R.N.R., the Stormking's commanding officer. "But it would have been impossible to tow the sinking sloop any farther as she might have plunged to the bottom at any moment. We had to slip the tow-rope." Said Sub-Lieut. A. C. Hooper, R.N.R., also of the Stormking, "Twice during the tow part of the complement of the Woodpecker was taken off. A skeleton crew was retained on board. Then we had a signal to expect a north-easterly gale. Immediately Commander H. L. Pryse, R.N.R., her commanding officer, decided that the Woodpecker could not live through a gale and he ordered 'Abandon ship.' The ship's company watched the end of their ship from the decks of the corvettes H.M.S. Azalea and H.M.C.S. Chilliawack."

The gallant little Stormking, with several salvaged ships to her credit, celebrated the first anniversary of her commission in March 1944, and her commanding officer, who took part in beach operations during the N. African landings, at the age of 25 is the youngest captain in the rescue tug service.

HIT BY A TORPEDO, the sloop Woodpecker (in background) was photographed from the deck of H.M. tug Stormking which had her in tow before she foundered and sank, as related above. See also pp. 710-711. *Photo, British Official*

They Salvage Torpedoed British Merchantman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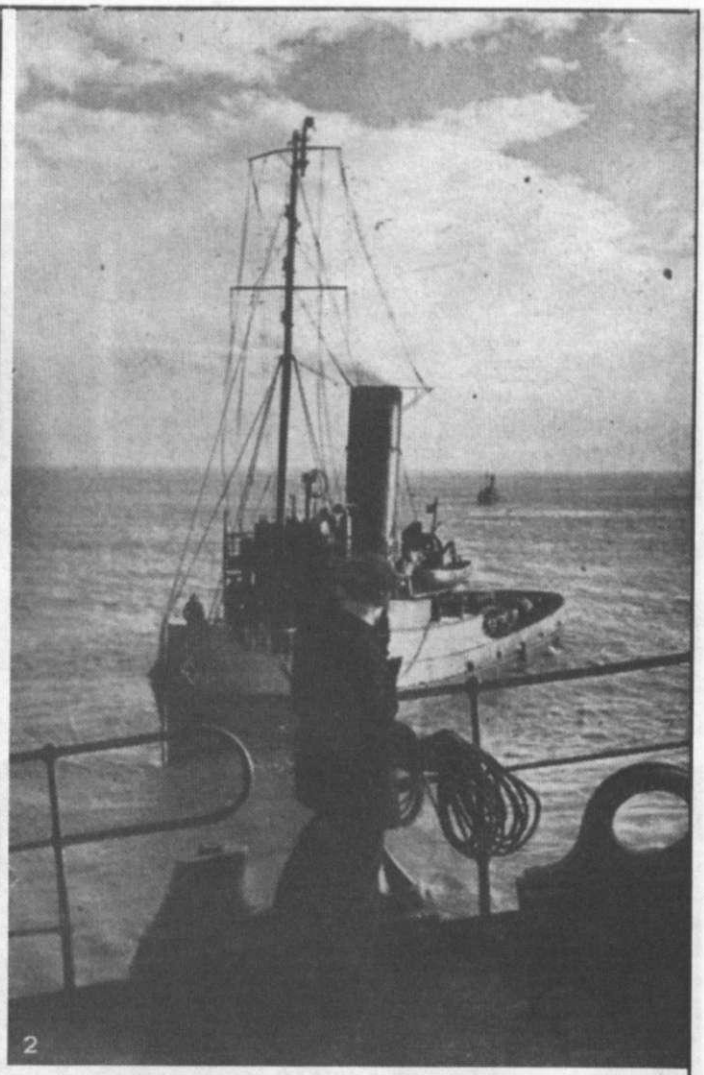
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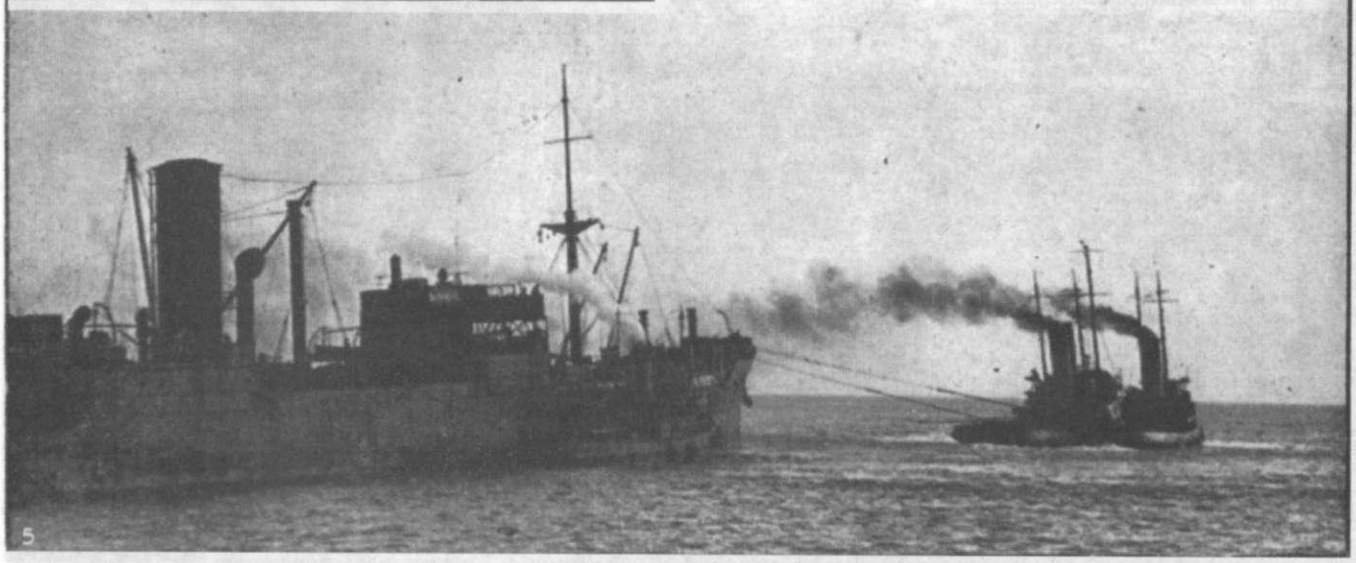
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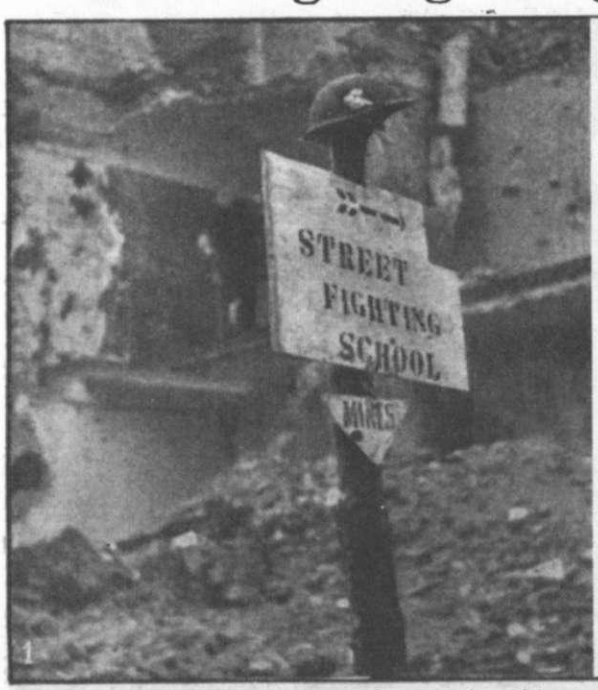
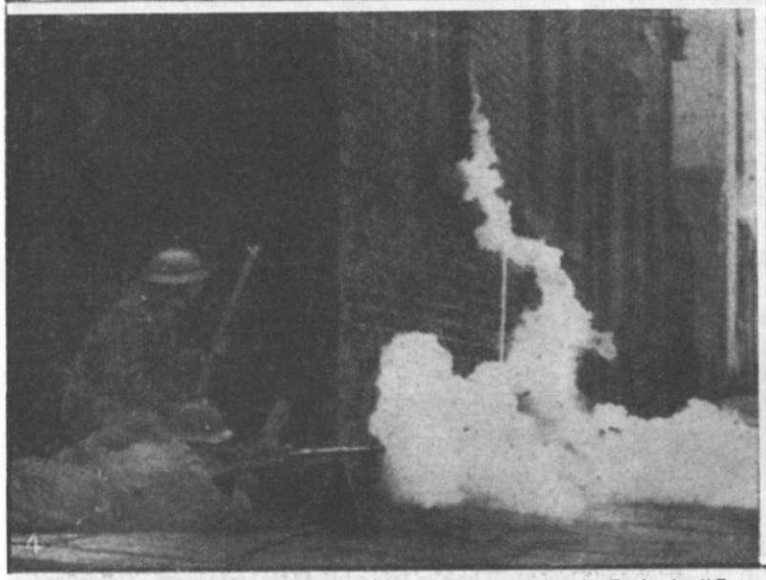
SALVAGE OFFICER AND TUG CAPTAINS go into conference (1), planning to the last detail how to save a torpedoed cargo vessel. Operations agreed upon, a pilot rope is thrown from the wreck to a rescue tug (2) where the massive tow rope is hooked into position (3) and then prepared for casting off (4). Once again the little tugs of the Royal Navy have justified themselves: that which was a wreck (5) will sail another day. See narratives in facing page.

Photos, Keystone

Street Fighting Taught Amidst Italian Rubble



LESSONS IN STREET FIGHTING in Ortona, Italy, which was captured on Dec. 28, 1943, by the 8th Army after days of bitter house-to-house combat, are now part of routine training. Part of the town, a few miles behind the present front line, has been turned into a "school" where veterans of this type of warfare pass on their hard-won practical knowledge to the less experienced: a signpost (1) proclaims the fact; it also warns trainees against imaginary mines. A section advances from behind the cover of a battered wall (2) and picks its way to the first house.



U.S. TROOPS CO-OPERATE with British in similar training in England. "Entrymen" about to clear a house (3); at a street corner a British Brer-gun group (4) repels a counter-attack, while another Bren is taken to the top floor of a house by a soldier who uses ropes and grappling-irons to scale the wall (5), and an American follows him up (6). This method of climbing is known as "fly-walking." A house is usually cleared from the top downwards, if practicable.

Photos, British Official; F. H. Brindley

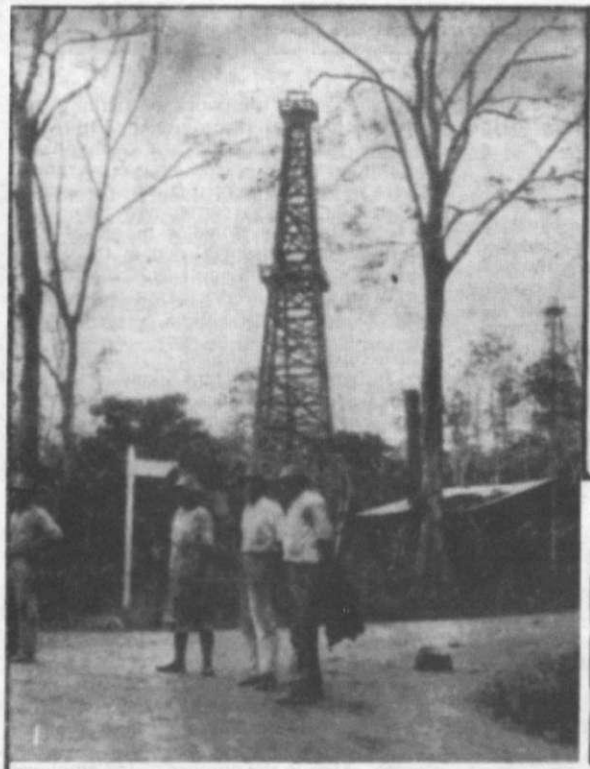
Britain's Colonies in the War: No. 6—Trinidad

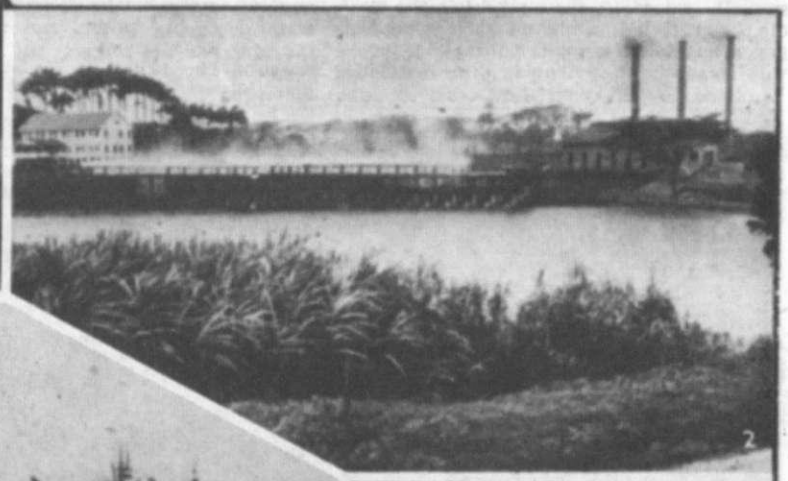
IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTOR to Allied war supplies pool is Trinidad, separated from Venezuela, S. America, by the Gulf of Paria, which forms an almost land-locked harbour capable of containing all the navies of the world. Trinidad was discovered by Columbus on his first voyage in 1498 ; it became British in 1797.

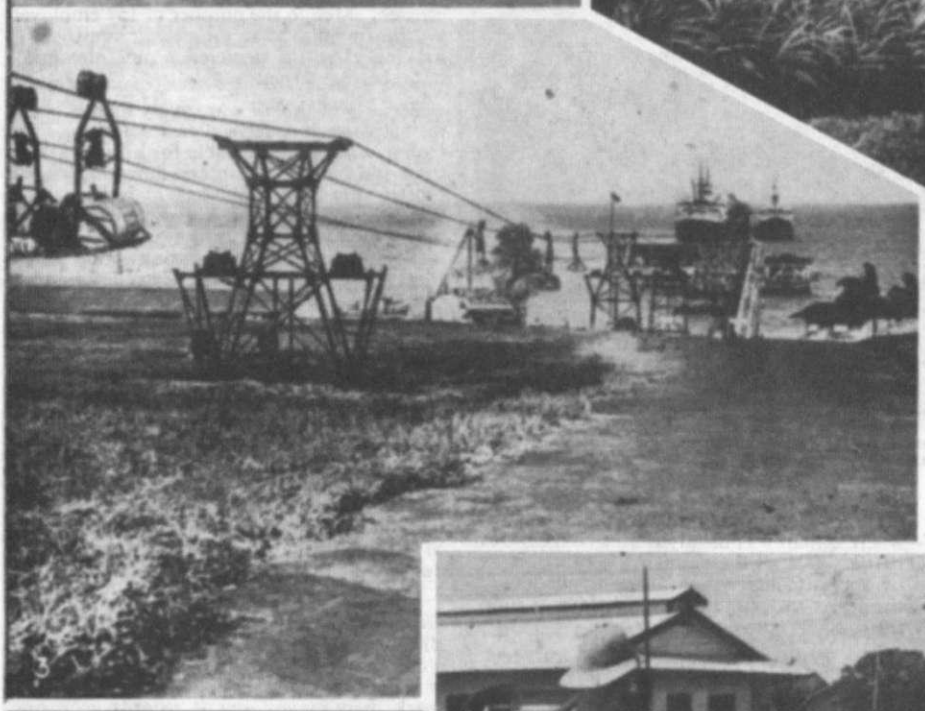
Chief help to the war effort is oil, of which Trinidad is the British Empire's leading producer ; in 1940 there were some 2,416 wells producing over 20,219,000 gallons a year. Pitch, from which asphalt is made, is also produced in large quantities ; pre-war figure was 127,859 tons annually. Other important commodities, pre-war figures for which give a guide to the amounts supplied, are sugar 270,000,000 lb. ; cocoa 43,000,000 lb. ; copra 9,500,000 lb. Some 2,500,000 coconuts are produced, and thousands of gallons of rum, most of which goes to the Navy. Trinidad has given many men to the Forces, and they serve all over the world. Decorations gained by men of the island include the M.C., two D.F.C.s and a D.C.M. There is a local Defence Force, and Trinidad women have formed A.T.S. and W.A.A.F units.

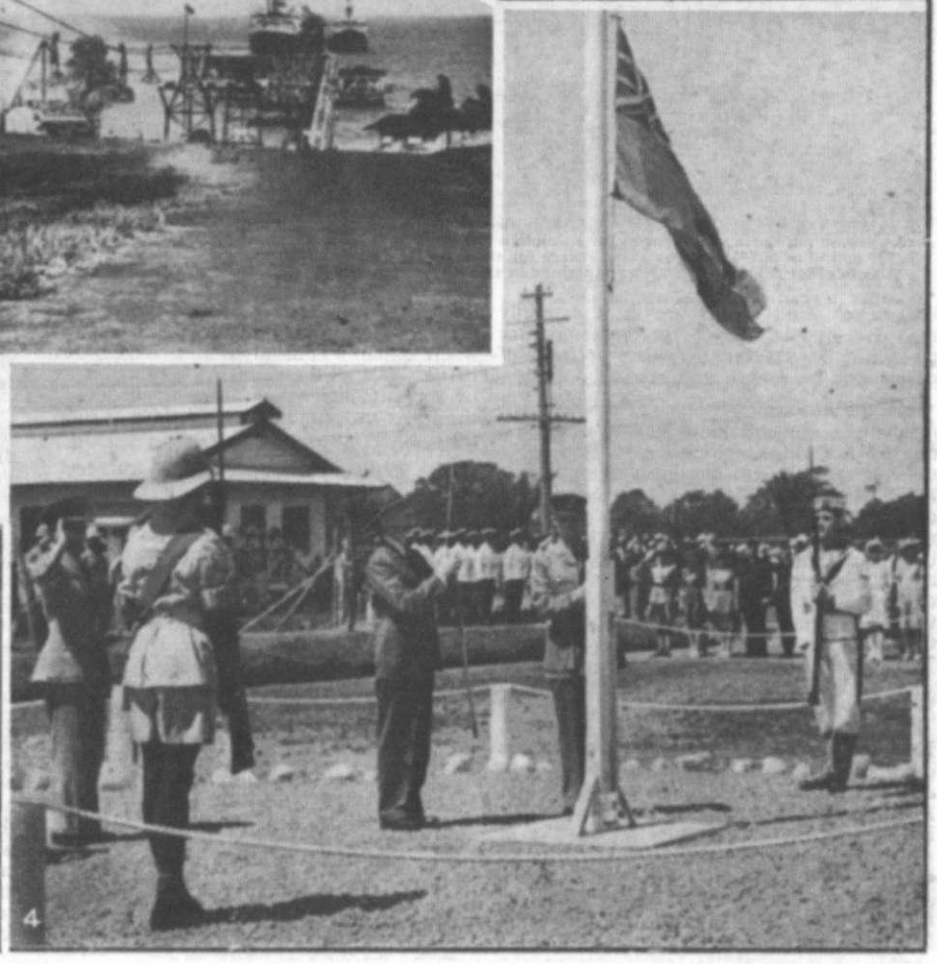
One of the oil-wells (1) producing to capacity for the United Nations, and the largest sugar refinery on the island (2). Down a rope cradle-way (3) to ships waiting at the jetty go barrels of valuable pitch-asphalt from the famous pitch lake in S.W. Trinidad —144 acres in extent. Hoisting the R.A.F. standard at a commemorative service to the Battle of Britain held at Piarco airfield (4) is Acting Governor A. B. Wright.

Photos, Lubinski, Sport & General, E. P. Smith









Honoured Rest at the Last for the Fallen

The last rites that it is in the power of the Authorities to accord to those who have given their lives in the war are the responsibility of the Graves Registration Service and the Imperial War Graves Commission. ALEXANDER DILKE explains here the work of the special units concerned with interment, and the marking and maintaining of the last hallowed resting places.

BY 1914-18 standards our casualties in the present war have been "light," though many thousands of soldiers, sailors and airmen from the Empire lie buried in Britain or "some corner of a foreign field that is for ever England." The burial of these men who have given their lives, and the marking of their graves, is receiving the same reverent care as the similar sad task during and after the last war, a task which was only just completed before the outbreak of the present war.

In Madagascar, North Africa, Sicily, Italy, New Guinea and in Britain itself new cemeteries have been designed according to the very high standards set in 1918. As the fighting front has moved forward, soldiers specially trained for the work begin the task of bringing the men from their scattered graves and burying them in these cemeteries with the temporary standard cross to mark the grave. Full details are most carefully recorded, and in due course the temporary cross will be replaced by whatever form of permanent headstone is agreed upon.

On the overseas battlefields, the work of marking and maintaining graves is carried out by the Graves Registration Service of the Army. When circumstances permit, the Imperial War Graves Commission takes over responsibility. Shortly after the Germans had been driven from North Africa, the Army requested the Commission to take over responsibility for permanent maintenance and construction of the graves of soldiers who fell in the East African campaigns and the many campaigns in the Desert and in Tunisia and Algeria.

THE Commission created a new administrative area and appointed Col. R. H. Hoffman, formerly of the Staff of the Union of South Africa Defence Force, to take charge. As Assistant Director of Graves Registration and Inquiries in the Middle East for a year, he had great experience of the special problems involved. Mr. J. Hubert Worthington was appointed Principal Architect for North Africa. Seventeen to nineteen permanent cemeteries for those who fell in the Western Desert and North Africa are being laid out and during the coming months some will be handed over to the Imperial War Graves Commission.

The choice of a site for a military cemetery is never simple, for ease of access and maintenance as well as military association and environment have to be taken into consideration. The work of locating the scattered graves of men who fell in the many battles in Africa is now going on apace. It is difficult and sometimes dangerous work. Millions of mines were sown in the desert. Although it is now over one and a half years since Alamein, and the front line is thousands of miles away, unexploded shells, booby traps and mines remain. Rommel's booby-traps tied to our dead or littered near their temporary graves in the desert still wait for the unwary. Six officers and men of the Graves Registration Service have been killed lately. Shifting sands of the desert make maps obsolete and may obliterate a grave where a man was hastily buried in the heat of battle. Yet all these graves are being located by special units, going out with lorries into the desert and searching several days, perhaps, for a single grave.

SALUTE TO AMERICAN ARMY DEAD is fired by a guard of honour over the burial place of troops who fell during the fighting for Kwajalein Island, in the Pacific Marshalls group (see story in p. 729 and illus. p. 743). Painstaking search for the bodies of those as yet unburied will be carried out as in other theatres of war, as explained in this page. *Photo, Associated Press*

The soldiers carrying out this work feel a special responsibility and are determined that no comrade-in-arms shall lie in an unmarked grave. if persistence and the skilful use of recorded information and knowledge of the ways of the desert can prevent it. When all the men who fell at or near Alamein are brought in, they will lie in a cemetery approached at both ends through triumphal arches, and the desert site will be beautified with grass and shrubs.

It was not until fifteen years after the Cease Fire in 1918 that the Imperial War Graves Commission was satisfied that every fallen soldier who could be identified had been given a grave. Years after the end of the war, the finding of a cigarette case or a chance remark, resulted in identifications being made and another headstone being erected. We may expect the same thing to happen after the end of the present war.

In Madagascar the work of making permanent cemeteries is progressing. In Abyssinia the Foreign Office last year opened negotiations with the Ethiopian Government concerning the care of British war graves. In Palestine and in Syria new cemeteries have been opened. Some of the dead of the present war have been buried in the British Naval Cemetery at Tripoli (Syria) where lie men from H.M.S. Victoria and H.M.S. Camperdown, killed in 1893.

FROM Burma and Malaya there is no news, and it does not seem likely that there will be until the Japanese have been driven out. From the countries of Occupied Europe, reports of burials during the present war are received through the International Red Cross. Belgian patriots recently placed new crosses on the graves of Allied soldiers who fell during the 1940 campaign, at the cemetery at Blankenberghe. Friendly Danes have planted British graves in their country with roses and tulips.

News from the Continent of cemeteries containing the graves of the last war indicates that there has been no vandalism, although (necessarily) some neglect. Where headstones have been damaged or destroyed by battles or bombing they have been replaced by the Vichy authorities with wooden crosses. Men to the number of 157 employed by the Imperial War Graves Commission in looking after the cemeteries and memorials have been interned.

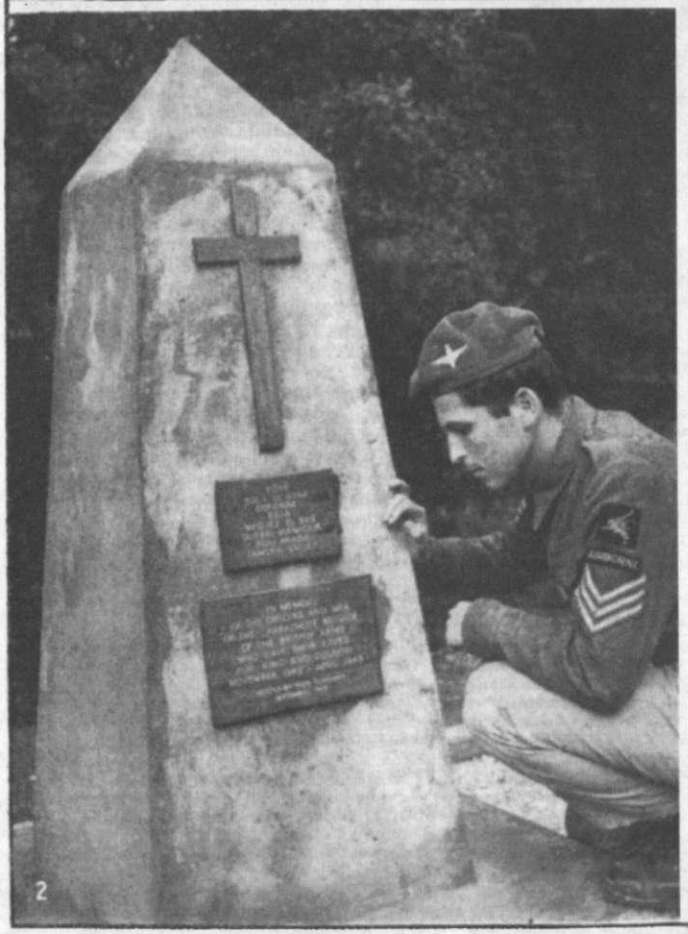
Because of the air war, many men engaged on active service have died in Britain. The Commission is responsible for all war graves in Britain and has marked with wooden crosses those in over 1,000 Service plots and privately owned graves in cemeteries and churchyards. The majority of men of all nationalities lie in Brookwood, where there is a U.S. Military Cemetery, and a Canadian Section where 50 Canadians brought back from Dieppe were buried with maple leaves from the tree in the centre of the 1914-18 Canadian plot. There are new sections for Belgian, Czechoslovak, French, and Polish graves.

IN Service plots, marked in the same way, are the graves of Nursing Services, W.R.N.S., A.T.S. and W.A.A.F. They have not been grouped separately, and the Commission has found that this absolute equality of treatment has the full approval of the Services and of the relatives.

The nature of this war has led to more civilians than Servicemen being killed in Britain. About 50,000 men, women and children have been killed by bombs. The Imperial War Graves Commission does not mark their graves, but it records each one, and with the aid of relatives has compiled a list, county by county; three leather-bound volumes with names and details have been deposited in Westminster Abbey. Copies are available for the consultation of the public in London, Edinburgh and Belfast.

At the end of the 1914-18 war the Imperial War Graves Commission was faced with the gigantic task of finding permanent resting places and memorials for 1,100,000 dead who were buried in 100,000 different places. Now, under the Vice-Chairmanship of Major-General Sir Fabian Ware, K.C.V.O., they have the advantage of experience, and we may be confident that when temporary crosses are replaced by permanent memorials, and the planting of the cemeteries has been completed, these will be worthy of the cause for which the fallen gave their lives.

Here Repose the Brave Who Gave Their All



A SIMPLE STONE marks the valorous deeds of men of the 8th Army who fell and were buried at Mozzagrogna (1), important Italian village on the River Sangro, captured on Nov. 30, 1943. On the 5th Army Garigliano front, steel helmets and rifles belong to three British soldiers who gave their lives (4). In the Tunisian campaign, a British Parachute Brigade fought with great distinction between November 1942 and April 1943 on every sector of the 1st Army front; on the site of one of the Brigade's battles a sergeant pays homage to fallen comrades (2). A Canadian padre holds a drumhead service at a cemetery of the Canadian Seaforth Highlanders of the 8th Army (3).

Photos, British Official

How Do We Stand in the Burmese War Zone?

Fighting in the Far East flares up and increases in tempo. For the Japanese in Burma this has meant determined Allied offensives in the north and the south, while they have launched an attack on the Indian frontier State of Manipur. In this article a Special Correspondent of THE WAR ILLUSTRATED reviews the somewhat confused position.

DURING the past month the Allied and Japanese forces in the Burmese war zone have been very active. For in some six weeks, with the commencement of the monsoons, the campaigning season in Burma will have come to an end. It is now evident that, while an invasion of German-occupied Western Europe is still pending, a large scale "aero-naval" offensive against the Japanese in Burma and the Burmese-Javan chain of islands is not possible.

Instead, early in December 1943, American-equipped and trained Chinese forces under General Joseph Stilwell launched an offensive across the Patkai Range and forced their way into the Hukawng Valley. Their immediate object is to clear Northern Burma of the Japanese by capturing their main base at Myitkyina, the terminus of the railway from Mandalay and Rangoon, while the ultimate aim is to link the Burma Road with Ledo in Assam by means of a motor road. The airfield at Myitkyina is also of immense value to the China Air Ferry Command.

In this attack the Chinese have met with a fair amount of success. Their main line of advance has been down the Hukawng Valley, crossing the Patkai Range via the Paungsoe Pass. The town of Maingkwan in the valley is now in their hands and they are operating in the neighbourhood of Shaduzup, which is occupied by the British. From Shaduzup a fairly good metalled road, 68 miles long, runs to Mogaung, which is on the Mandalay–Myitkyina railway. To the north of Myitkyina a British column composed of Gurkhas and Chin levies is advancing from Sumprabum towards Myitkyina.

It must be remembered that Northern Burma is a mountainous and sparsely populated country, and even after Burma was overrun the Japanese were never able to clear this part of Burma entirely of British and Indian forces, who held strong positions in some sectors.

To prevent hard-pressed Japanese forces in the Mogaung-Myitkyina area from receiving reinforcements from Mandalay by rail, British and American airborne troops (complete with arms and supplies), under the late Maj.-Gen. Orde Wingate, were dropped, according to the Japanese, near Katha, 100 miles south of Myitkyina, where the British also managed to construct an air strip right in the centre of Northern Burma. This daring move on the part of the Allied forces placed the enemy in a precarious position. But these military operations in Northern Burma cannot be interpreted as being part of any major campaign to reconquer Burma. Their main aim is, perhaps, to open up communications with China.

On April 3, 1944, it was announced that the Japanese had launched their expected counter-attack against the airborne Allied troops and the air strip which had been established 200 miles behind their lines. An attacking force of 200 of the enemy took up positions a short distance north of the landing strip, which was used by Dakota transport planes bearing supplies for the Allied columns. Early in the fight, which lasted throughout three days, the Japanese gained control of the light plane dispersal area, but were later driven out. Only one small plane was found not to have been destroyed or rendered non-airworthy by the withdrawing Japanese. British and American wounded were assisted into the plane, and a Polish sergeant took off safely amid a hail of bullets from the enemy. The Japanese were eventually routed with the aid of Allied fighters, and the danger of losing the air strip was averted.

It is quite probable that the Japanese High Command, fearing that the British and Indian troops would develop simultaneous thrusts from Manipur towards the Chindwin Valley, decided to forestall any such projected offensive by themselves invading India. At this late stage of the campaigning season it is unlikely that the present Japanese attack is part of any grandiose military offensive against India.

IN their drive against Manipur State the Japanese made three separate assaults: one from Tiddim in the Chin Hills, the second from Tamu on the Burmese-Indian frontier in the Kabaw Valley, and the other from the neighbourhood of Tamanthi across the Naga Hills towards Kohima. It was the last of these thrusts, striking north-west into India in the direction of the vital Assam-Bengal railway, forming the main supply route for General Stilwell's American-equipped Chinese troops in Northern Burma, which seemed to constitute the greatest danger. If the railway should be cut, supplies could be flown to General Stilwell, but the pressure on the Japanese on that front would be considerably relieved. Imphal itself, the capital of Manipur State, was directly menaced by this northern drive.

NORTH OF IMPHAL, on April 12, 1944, Japanese troops were near the 14th Army's railhead at Dinapur, while Gen. Stilwell's Chinese troops were advancing towards Mogaung and the enemy key air base of Myitkyina, Burma railway terminus.
By courtesy of News Chronicle

THE Seventeenth Indian Division, who were in Tiddim when the Japanese began an outflanking movement, moved out twenty-four hours ahead of programme. They made a successful fighting withdrawal into the Imphal plain with all their wounded and the bulk of their transport, clearing Japanese road blocks on the way.

The very difficult nature of the country will be appreciated. There is but one good road in the Manipur frontier region, and it leads from Tamu to Manipur Road Station, near Dinapur. This road crosses the Letha range, 3,000 feet above sea-level, and continues up the Manipur River Valley to Imphal, 52 miles from Tamu. Another, poorer, road connects Imphal with Silchar, a town on the branch of the Assam-Bengal railway.

Climatic conditions are extremely bad: the country surrounding Imphal is very malarious, while the rainfall during the monsoon season is between 200 and 300 inches. Part of the Japanese plan may well be to seize strategic points inside the Indian frontier, which they can hold during the rainy season, thus forestalling the Allies from preparing for an attack on Burma from Assam.

In the Burmese maritime province of Arakan, though Maungdaw and Buthidaung are in British hands, the presence of strong Japanese forces in the Mayu Hills has prevented British forces from advancing southwards. Nevertheless, Kyauktaw, due east of Buthidaung, was recently captured by British troops. The Province of Arakan is cut by a maze of rivers and tidal creeks and covered with a series of low-lying, wooded hills, which send out spurs and sub-spurs almost to the sea coast. Thus an overland drive towards Akyab is very slow and difficult. Arakan can only be occupied by a combined sea and land offensive, and obviously the South-East Asia Command do not consider this isolated province of sufficient strategic importance to warrant such an attack at the present stage.

JAPANESE IN TUNNELS HELD UP OUR ADVANCE

IT may appear from outside that the Arakan campaign in Burma is making painfully slow progress. It appears that way, too, from inside (writes Geoffrey Tebbutt, Evening Standard war correspondent on the Arakan front). Contributing factors were two Japanese tunnel positions on an abandoned railway line between Maungdaw and Buthidaung where the road corkscrews through the wild precipitous gorges of the Mayu range.

The Japanese have been there some months, and it was necessary for us to secure them to maintain the wet season supply line to Buthidaung. One, the most westerly, was taken during the last week in March 1944.

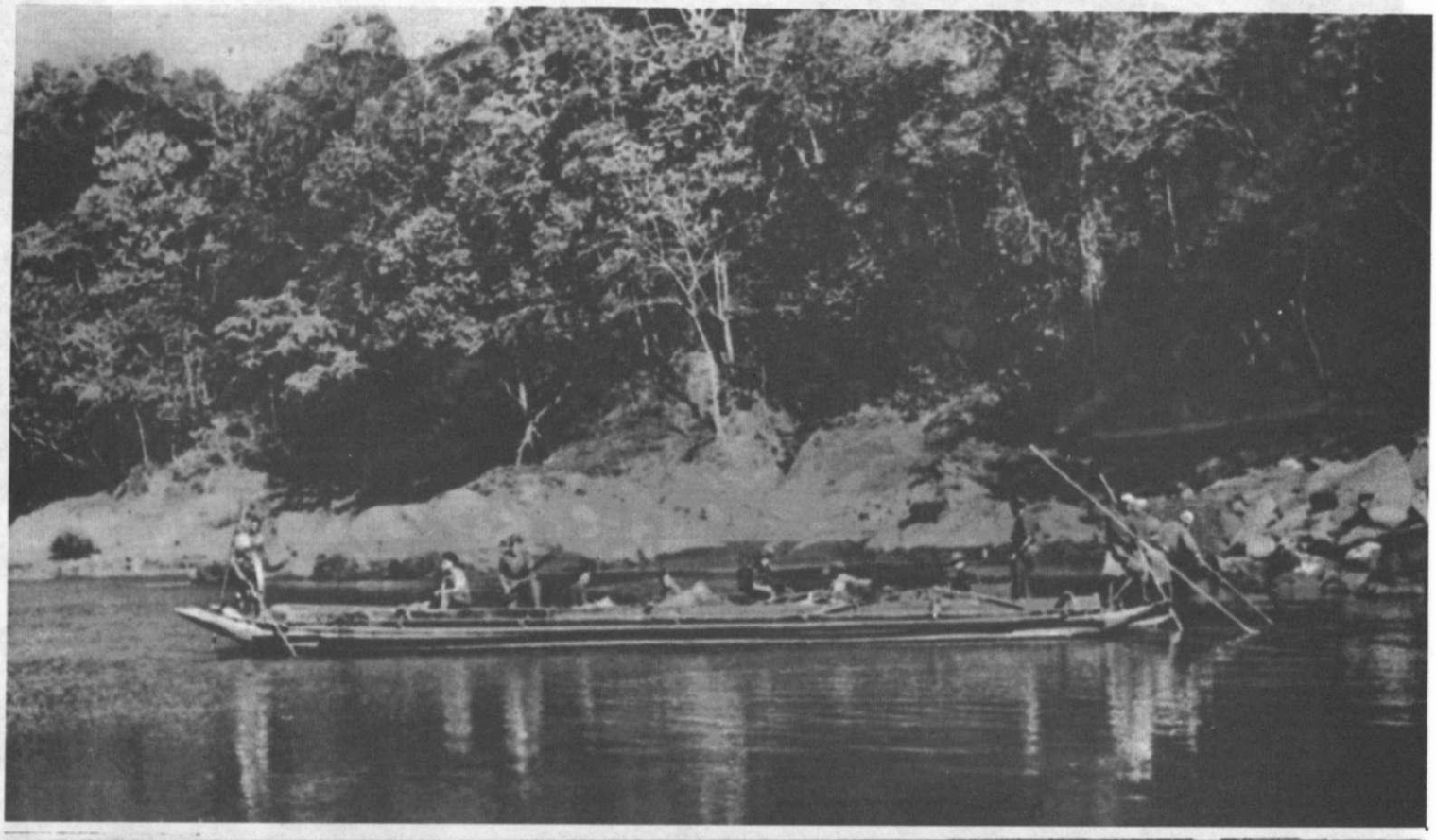
THIS tunnel is 150 yards long, 8 to 10 feet high and 11 feet wide, and had been attacked for several weeks. A handful of Japs held it desperately. There is a mountain of earth above the tunnel, and shells and bombs apparently did not affect it. The paths by which British troops approached the defences are steep and narrow.

This is what happened just before the capture. A three days' artillery mortar bombardment preceded an attack by three British companies, which, operating from two directions, gained with difficulty three more of the features surrounding the tunnel. The Japanese had only a little light artillery around the tunnel, but they tossed grenades down as the attackers climbed.

THE British company had to use scaling ladders to climb a 50-foot brick retaining wall in the railway cutting, and observation of the enemy's movements during the preliminary bombardment was almost impossible through the clouds of dust as the shells burst.

It took a day to bring direct fire to bear on the tunnel entrance, then Sherman tanks were able to send a few rounds near the tunnel entrance.

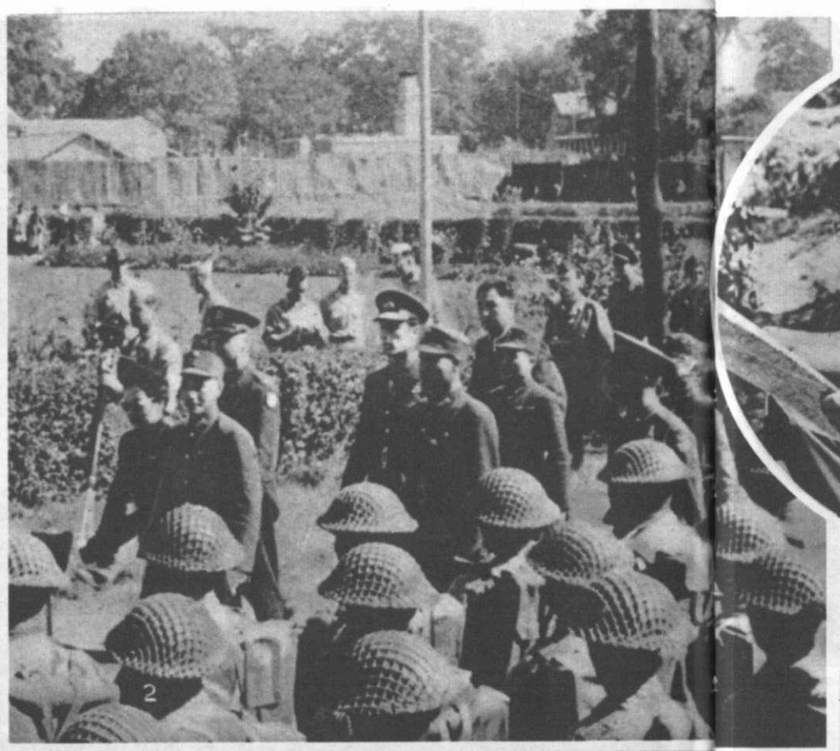
They also used searchlights in a vain attempt to penetrate the dust and observe the enemy's defences near the tunnel mouth, while the Japanese, withdrawing from one bamboo covered hill to another, further delayed the capture of the tunnel itself. It will long be remembered by the succession of units assigned to it as among the hardest and ugliest tasks they have had.



Photos, Indian Official, Keystone

Through the Green Hell of Burma

Jungle horrors are increased by extreme difficulties of terrain encountered by our forces now engaged in Burma. Rivers may help to solve transport problems: a supply barge (top) navigated by native boatmen plies between densely wooded shores. Water, too, is on occasion the best path to follow: jungle-wise Kachin scouts (bottom) wade knee-deep on the trail of the Japanese. They are led by a U.S. sergeant, left foreground. Regular Allied troops follow the scouts.



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New Roads for the Jungle Fighters in Arakan

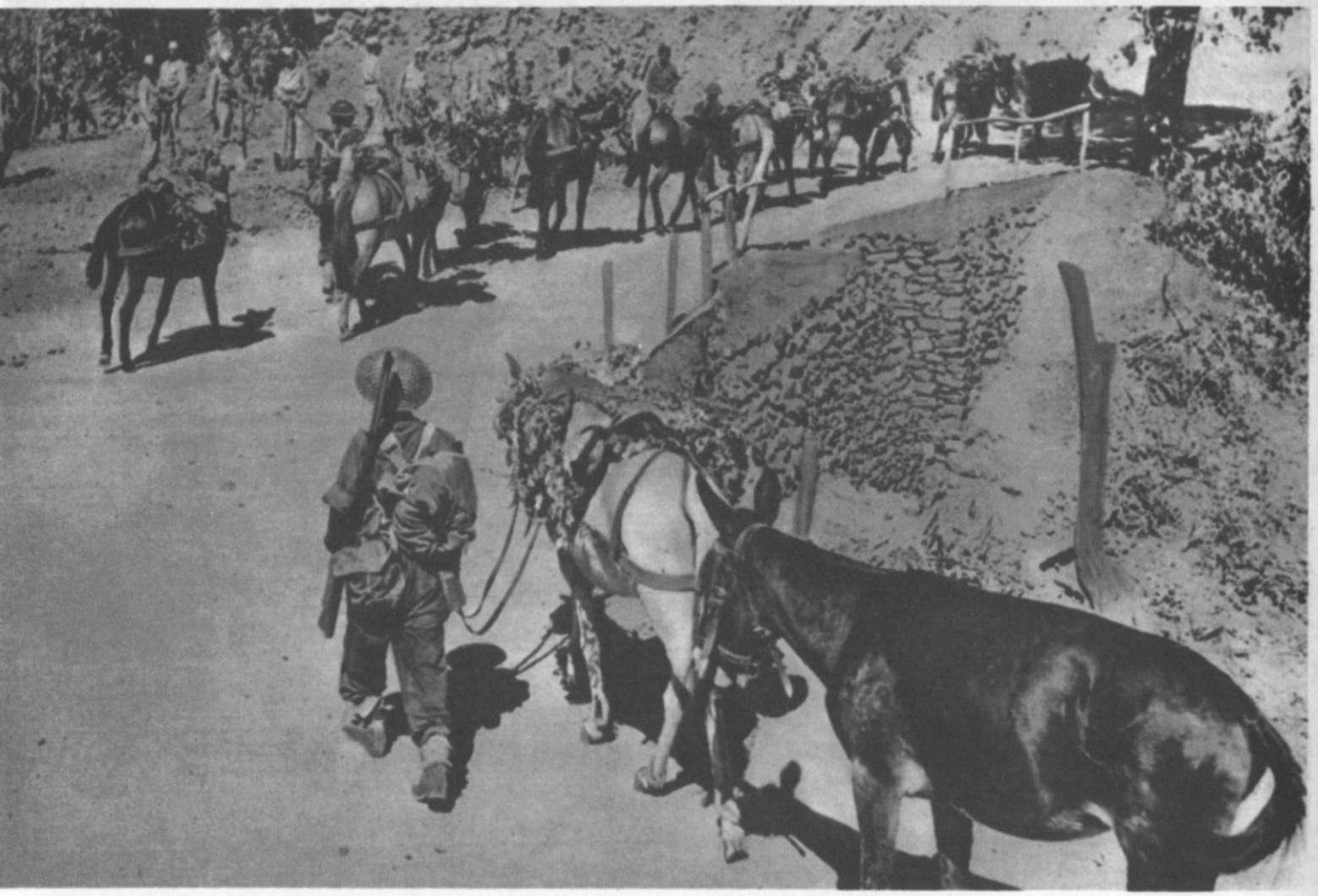
Indian Air Force co-operates with the R.A.F. in support of troops : Sqd.-Leader Mehar Singh (1) shows a photo-mosaic of enemy territory, prepared by his squadron, to Air Marshal Sir John Baldwin. Engineers have succeeded in rebuilding or improving a number of roads in Arakan : laden carriers (4) move up with war essentials and return with Allied wounded. Chinese warriors are inspected by Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten (2, centre) and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek.

Photos, Indian Official, Paul Popper, Keystone

5

Supplies Arrive by Air for Guerilla Columns

Playing a significant part in the jungle campaigns in Northern Burma are airborne troops ; their brilliant commander, Maj.-Gen. Orde Wingate, was killed in a plane crash on March 24, 1944. Where other means fail, food and ammunition are taken to the Allied guerilla columns by air and dropped by parachute (5). Commander of the 5th Indian Division on the Arakan front is Maj.-Gen. H. R. Briggs, D.S.O. and bar (3), seen studying a map on the steps of his caravan headquarters.



Tanks and Mules Move up on the Burma Front

Photos, Indian Official

British and Indian troops of the 14th Army scored a signal success when they turned encirclement of the 7th Division by Japanese in the Ngakyedauk Pass area into a great victory, on Feb. 24, 1944: a Gen. Grant tank (top) manned by the 25th Dragoons which helped to blast enemy positions. The steep pass is surmounted by a mule convoy (bottom) which delivers urgently needed stores, including radio sets whereby communication is maintained between widely separated columns.

VIEWS & REVIEWS

Of Vital War Books

by Hamilton Fyfe

The Wonderworking R.A.M.C.

We talk a lot about terrifying developments in machinery for killing that have made warfare today something totally different from what it used to be. Why shouldn't we think sometimes about the change in the way the wounded are looked after, the vast improvement in the treatment of wounds, the rapidity with which the injured are taken back from the front and, by various stages, each most carefully thought out and systematized, landed in a first-class hospital, where they have every chance to recover? I want you to think about this side of warfare as it is revealed in a very readable, instructive and also entertaining book called R.A.M.C. (Hutchinson, 6s.) by Major Anthony Cotterell, who amused us with What! No Morning Tea! and has another book about Army life, An Apple for the Sergeant, coming out soon.

One statement in it will probably surprise you. Disease and illness give the Army doctors far more work than do wounds. In the 1914-18 war twice as many men went down "sick" as were casualties in the fighting. In the Pacific islands the ratio is no doubt higher; there malaria claims many victims. In Burma and Malaya climate accounts also for many casualties of the "non-battle" order.

One of the worst causes of sickness in the Army is dyspepsia. Though the author does not say so, the main reason for this is bad cooking. The food is excellent; never has it been better or so varied. But the standard of cooking is still low. Major Cotterell says soldiers who suffer from acute indigestion "were usually suffering from the same thing in civil life," or it is due to "the change to a new environment." I am afraid this will not explain the fact that "in a large hospital 15 to 20 per cent of the cases will be dyspeptic," or that "one in eight of the B.E.F. cases evacuated home from France up to the end of April 1940 was a case of stomach trouble."

On the other hand, no one is likely to contest the assertion "in North Africa the R.A.M.C. probably provided a better medical service than any army ever had before." Indeed, most of us who know how good it was would take out the "probably." For the first time parachute surgical units were used in this war area. "Of course, only the barest essentials, in their most compressed and capsule form, could be taken"; but all the same, the articles dropped with the surgeon, the anaesthetist and their orderlies, included operating table, plaster of paris, blood plasma, sterilizer, anaesthetic equipment, drugs, medical comforts, bedpan. Beds, blankets and operating theatre had to be improvised on descent.

In the desert this was difficult enough, but the jungle is worse. In Abyssinia one such theatre was a thatched hut built by muleteers.

It was about 9 feet by 12 feet and 8 feet high. The roof leaked wickedly, and the bitterly cold winds shrieked through the walls, however thickly they had been thatched. They tried lining the walls and roof with their mackintosh groundsheets, but on battle days these had to be taken down and used to cover the patients waiting outside for treatment. Channels were dug at the foot of the walls to drain the rainwater. They were not dug deep enough at first and the surgeon had to operate with his feet astride a growing stream. His hands became stiff with cold. He had to keep on washing them in hot water. They became chapped and raw.

That illustrates one aspect of the work the army surgeons do; taking it all as it comes, keeping a cheerful countenance to encourage their patients, and working sometimes till they literally drop with fatigue. Another side of their work—or rather that of the administration staff—is the organization necessary for the evacuation of, say, 20,000 battle casualties after an engagement or, more likely, while one is still going on. To clear off that number, seventy-eight trains are required at a time when every railway is jammed with the urgent confusions of battle.

These trains must be organized to arrive at the right place at the right time, and get their highly perishable cargoes away quickly. They must run to a perfect timetable, and yet not interfere with the delivery of supplies and reinforcements. Meanwhile, the enemy is doing his best to prevent anything arriving anywhere. The lines or, worse still, the solitary line is being attacked wherever possible.

Through all this the casualties must be nursed and comforted with dressing, drugs, and skill. All this must be organized. Even to provide 20,000 men with cups of tea and cigarettes takes a bit of thinking out, and the doctors themselves must eat.

And, after all, the casualties, which have been reckoned by the staff at 20,000, may by misfortune be turned into 40,000. "It is then necessary to perform miracles." To the everlasting credit of the R.A.M.C. these miracles are always forthcoming. They were in France, when the retreat was so rapid that there was scarcely ever time to settle down and work on the wounded. They were in Malaya. They were in all the African campaigns. They were when we slipped up so badly at Salerno.

In the R.A.M.C. they are now ('twas not ever thus!) more open to new ideas than the general run of doctors in private practice. They have, for example, taken up psychiatry, which has knocked out the delusion, prevalent during the last war, that abnormal behaviour was due to "shell-shock," a term used to cover almost all types of psychological illness caused by battle conditions. Now that theory has been abandoned. It has been realized that the trouble originates inside the man rather than outside. He has had something that was in his mind or character stirred up by what he has been through. The psychiatrist tries to make him a useful member of society again.

We did not for some time after the war began—two and a half years, to be exact—adopt the German system of finding out by careful examination of recruits what work a man is specially fitted to do and what he could not possibly do. One in every ten men "needs special consideration as to how he should be employed." If they don't get it, they are a nuisance, possibly a danger. They are liable to break out in all sorts of ways in "the gruesome stress of battle," though they may do so without going into battle at all. The R.A.M.C. finds them something to do that is within their powers.

Another problem for the R.A.M.C. which has been a headache of this war is that of wounded men in tanks. It is particularly difficult to get them out. You cannot have stretcher-bearers. "The wounded are either carried back by tank or else by the medical officer who careers round the battlefield in his scout car followed by an ambulance." First-aid equipment of tanks now includes small chloroform flasks which can be crushed in cotton wool and held to a wounded man's mouth, so as to give him unconsciousness while he is being lifted out. After that, if he is lucky, he will get back to base and so, if he is badly hit, home. A Scottish soldier wounded on a Wednesday in North Africa was by Friday in a hospital twenty miles from Glasgow, where he lived. That is what the Royal Army Medical Corps can do, with the aid of the R.A.F.

A FIELD SURGICAL UNIT AT WORK

FACTS and figures recently published (in the Evening News) are striking testimony to the efficiency of the R.A.M.C. In nine months in North Africa, Sicily and Italy, one Field Surgical Unit dealt with 1,400 cases, only 5·5 per cent of which proved fatal—about one in twenty. During battles, this particular unit was in operation for 16 hours out of every 24.

In North Africa some 60 per cent of the wounds were caused by mortar fire. In Italy a greater proportion were caused by high explosive shells. Limb wounds formed the greatest part of the surgical work. Of the soldiers suffering from these, a considerable number will, after complete treatment, be classed as Category A fighting men.

The knee, 44 per cent, and the elbow, 29 per cent, were the joints most frequently injured. Of a thousand major battle casualties, flesh wounds accounted for 40 per cent, bone and joint injuries 30 per cent, abdominal wounds 8 per cent, penetrating chest wounds 4 per cent, and penetrating head wounds 2 per cent.

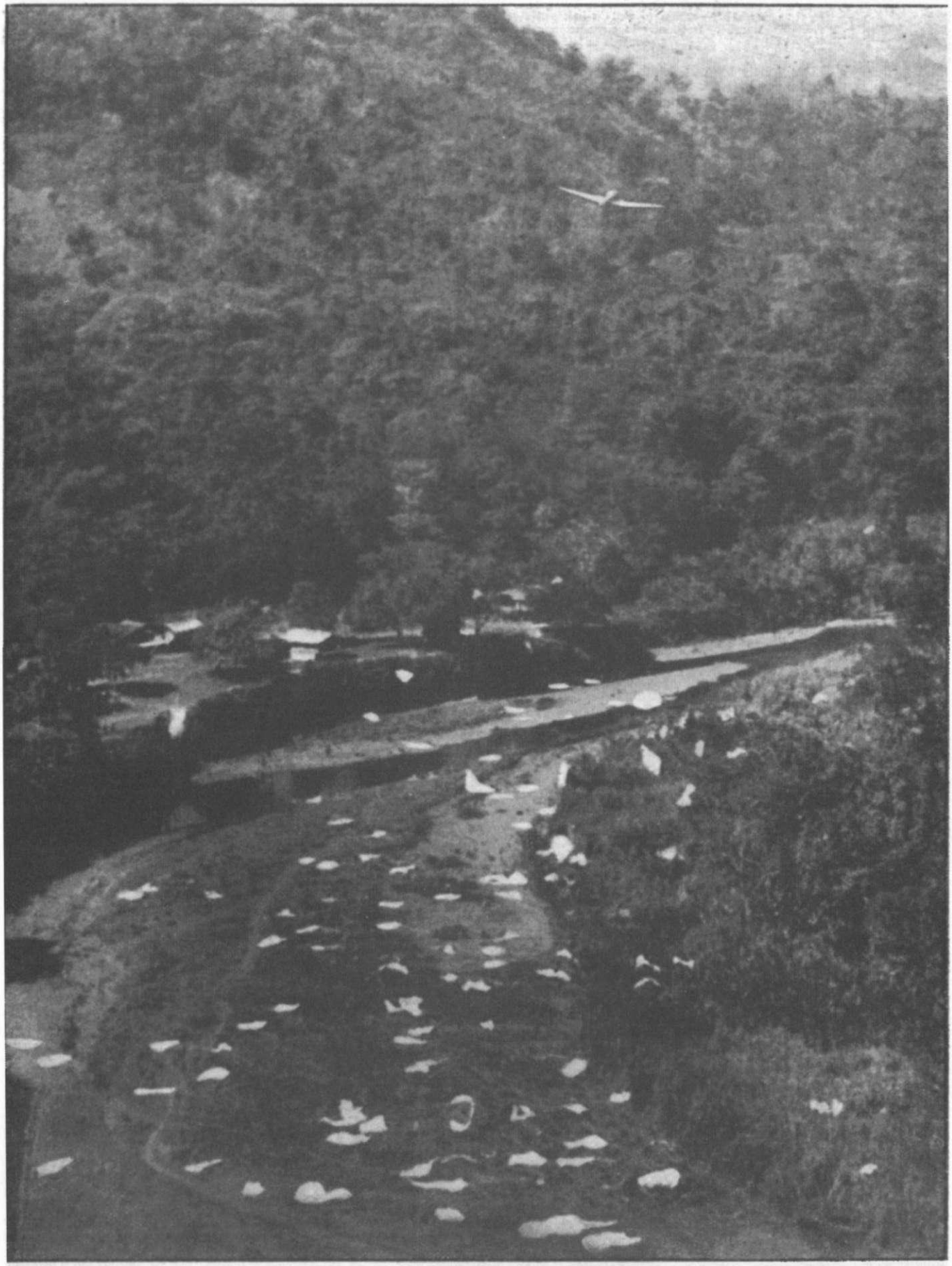
THE FLAG OF MERCY, carried by a British medical orderly, goes forward amidst the rubble of Cassino on the main 5th Army front in Italy. The Red Cross was first adopted as a world symbol for healing in 1864. In that year, too, it was agreed that medical personnel of all nations at war were to be regarded as non-combatants. The wonderful story of the Royal Army Medical Corps in this war is told in the book here reviewed. *Photo, British Official*

Sweden Looks Anxiously to Her Home Defences

KINGDOM OF SWEDEN, sandwiched between Occupied Norway and pro-Nazi Finland, possesses vast timber resources and an annual iron ore production of 14 million tons, both long desired by the Germans. Should the latter violate her neutrality, Sweden's ports will be blocked by sunken ships. Backing Sweden's attitude is a modern army 600,000 strong, a Home Guard of 300,000, and a Navy and Air Force of considerable striking power.

STREET FIGHTING IN STOCKHOLM, Sweden's capital, carried out as an exercise on March 12, 1944, was closely watched by Minister of Defence Dr. Skold (2). Home Guards and regular troops participated: a Home Guard is ready with a sub-machine gun at a vantage point (1), and regulars advance behind the cover of a tank (3). House-to-house fighting occupied certain members of the Home Guard, who sniped from house balconies (4). A bridge is held against the "enemy" (5), and A.R.P. personnel rescue a "casualty" from a bombed building (6). *Photos, Pictorial Press*

Aircraft Supply 7th Division on Arakan Front



REMARKABLE AIR SUPPLY FEAT was performed when the 7th Division of the 14th Army was cut off on the Arakan front in Burma. Until it was relieved and the Japanese defeated, on Feb. 24, 1944, R.A.F. and U.S.A.A.F. transport planes dropped tons of supplies to the Division. Some of the parachuted stores are seen on the ground in a jungle clearing, while one of the transports which dropped them is discernible against the background of dense forest. See also p. 753.

Photo, British Official

How 40,000 Civilian Sky-Watchers Aid the R.A.F.

Following their usual civilian occupations when off duty, donning blue battledress and beret when their turn comes, members of the Royal Observer Corps—whose motto is "Forewarned is Forearmed"—render to Britain indispensable front-line service that never ends. In every type of weather, frequently in circumstances of great personal danger, this round-the-clock vigilance proceeds unfailingly, as described below by KEITH COOPER.

FROM lonely hilltops, headlands and other strategic points, the "Eyes and Ears of the R.A.F." operate without intermission: checking by sight or hearing the movements of all aircraft, friendly or hostile, over Britain. Working in closest co-operation with the R.A.F., by the efficiency and courage of its 40,000 members the Royal Observer Corps has saved very many lives and enabled our fighter pilots and ground defences to take heavy toll of the enemy in the air.

Formed nearly 30 years ago, the Observer Corps received the title of Royal in April 1941 in recognition of its magnificent work. At various times under the Admiralty, the War Office, or the Police, this civilian organization is today R.A.F. controlled, with its headquarters at R.A.F. Fighter Command: the latter, it was announced in February 1944, now replaced by an organization called the Air Defence of Great Britain, under the leadership of Air Marshal Sir Roderic Maxwell Hill.

The present commandant of the R.O.C. is Air Commodore Finlay Crerar, C.B.E., who before taking up this post was Deputy-Director of R.A.F. Welfare. Recruits to the Corps come from many walks of life. Mostly they are part-time watchers, men receiving payment of 1s. 3d. an hour, women 10d., girls 6d., boys 9d. Full-time men observers receive from £2 12s. to £3 18s. 6d. for a 48-hour week; women from £2 8s. 6d. to £2 15s.

TRAINED to identify by sight or hearing every type of aircraft—and there are nearly 300 kinds of friendly and hostile planes—the Corps operates about 1,500 posts, each of these constantly manned by two observers. There is nothing elaborate about the posts: they may be huts, or sandbagged shelters, affording a clear view of the sky. Here continual watch is kept, by day and night, by each "crew" with its binoculars, headphone and mouthpiece, map, and an instrument for ascertaining the height of any aircraft located.

By permanent telephone line each post is linked to a centre, of which there are 40, strategically placed, and during a normal day over 1,500,000 messages originate at the posts, these comprising details — identification, height, speed, direction —of every outgoing or incoming aircraft that may be seen or heard. At the centres to which these messages go direct the details are recorded, and there the course of planes reported upon is plotted on large squared maps. Posts are also connected to their neighbours by phone, so that the course any aircraft takes can be followed (and duly plotted) from one end of the country to the other.

Each centre is responsible for passing on all this information to Fighter Command (now, as previously mentioned, known as Air Defence of Great Britain), and in response fighter planes go up to intercept and do battle with intruders, ground defences are warned, and air-raid warnings sounded. Radiolocation now assists, but during the Battle of Britain the Observer Corps was the sole means of tracking enemy aircraft.

WHEN Rudolf Hess deposited himself by parachute in Scotland, in May 1941, and, as Hitler's deputy, brought with him a peace plan the "rejection of which would be followed by the utter destruction of Britain," it was the R.O.C. who followed the course of his Me. 110 from the moment this was sighted off the coast until it crashed.

The Nazis realize to the full the value to our defence system of these "Eyes and Ears," and on more than one occasion the crew of an observation post have had a narrow shave. On one occasion a Messerschmitt dived at a hill-top post and opened fire. The post was riddled by bullets. Death stared the two watchers in the face. But they phoned to their centre details of the enemy, and this information resulted in the German fighter being destroyed.

In the log-books of the posts you will find pencilled entries forming the core of many an interesting story. There is, for example, brief data of one observer on duty on the East Coast. Glancing out to sea, at midnight, he saw a merchant ship drifting on to the rocks. At once he raised the alarm: coastguards and a rocket life-saving squad were called to the scene. The ship's lights were failing, and promptly the observer suggested the calling-up of a mobile searchlight. Thanks to his action nearly all the crew were saved. To him, this sort of thing was just part of his recognized work, as is reporting the efforts and progress of a maimed Allied bomber or fighter limping home from battle on the Continent in the darkness of a stormy night, or co-operating with the Air-Sea Rescue Service whereby ditched airmen are saved from a watery grave, or logging through strenuous hours the departure or arrival of hordes of bombers or fighters, Allied or enemy. Nothing mechanically winged is missed, but recorded in such detail as time permits.

IN A ROYAL OBSERVER CORPS CENTRE, plotters seated around a large-scale table-map move counters over the face of the map in accordance with reports coming in from the neighbouring posts. This enables tellers, in the balcony overlooking the table, to phone minute-by-minute accounts of the progress of reported planes to an R.A.F. centre. *Photo, British Official*

IT is essential that an observer shall be kept up to scratch in his or her knowledge of aircraft development and tactics; therefore an examination must be passed at intervals of six months; silhouettes of planes must be identified with absolute certainty, and the incidentals of reporting and route-plotting must be to them as easy as A B C. A constitution that stands up to prolonged nerve-strain and to the rigours of winter nights spent mostly in the open is as necessary as all this skill.

Proud are they of the metal badge worn on the blue beret, depicting an Elizabethan coast-watcher holding aloft a flaming torch. For in that badge is an echo of Armada days and nights, when other observers kept grim watch and ward, but unbeset by the perils these modern counterparts cheerfully and most valiantly accept as part of the price of citizenship today.

Proud also are they of the praise bestowed upon them by the R.A.F. fighter pilots; for of the Royal Observer Corps the fighters say: "They point 'em out and we knock 'em down!"

On their Eyes and Ears Our Country Depends

TELEPHONE REPORTS from Royal Observer Corps observation posts guide this woman member at a report centre (1) in charting a plane's course on a squared map. Off-duty after a four-hour spell of watching and listening, an observer makes tea for himself and colleague who is still on the job (2). A roof-top post (4) in a suburb offers more comforts than usually come the way of observers. Commandant of the R.O.C. since June 23, 1943, is Air-Commodore Finlay Crerar, C.B.E., aged 40 (3). His is the honour of directing the activities of the 40,000 boys, girls, women and men who constitute this great Corps and whose invaluable aid to the R.A.F. is the subject of the article in the facing page. Air-Commodore Crerar (then Wing Commander) organized the County of Aberdeen R.A.F. Squadron in the 1940 air battles over Britain.

Photos, British Official; Keystone

By Air and Land They Proved Themselves Men

Flt.-Lt. W. REID

In a night raid on Düsseldorf on Nov. 3, 1943, his bomber was attacked by an enemy fighter. Wounded in the head, shoulder and hands, he concealed the extent of his injuries and continued on his course. Soon afterwards another Nazi plane attacked, the bomber's navigator was killed, the wireless operator fatally injured and the mid-upper turret oxygen system destroyed. Flt.-Lt. Reid was again hit and was supplied with oxygen from a portable supply.

Having memorized his course, he went on to bomb the target effectively. Weak from loss of blood, with a crippled and defenceless plane, he reached a home airfield and landed safely. For "devotion to duty beyond praise" he won the V.C. Flt.-Lt. Reid is 23, enlisted in 1941, trained as a pilot in America, and has taken part in ten raids.

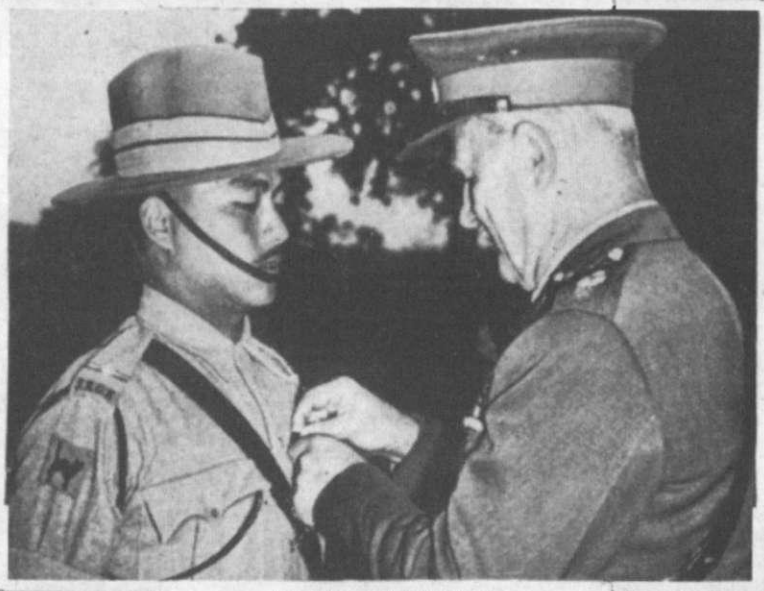
Actg. Major P. TRIQUET

The V.C. presented to him only a few hours after he had flown to London from Sicily, Major Triquet gained his award for superb leadership of a Canadian force in action on Dec. 14, 1943, when they withstood overwhelming odds during an 8th Army attack on the village of Casa Berardi, vital to the capture of the Ortona-Orsogna key road junction. With disregard for personal danger, Major Triquet rallied his men until the point was taken.

Lt. A. G. HORWOOD

First British officer of this war to gain the V.C. on the Burma front, Lt. Horwood's posthumously awarded decoration was for "calm, resolute bravery." At Kyaukchaw, on Jan. 17, 1944, he went with a forward company of the Northamptonshire Regiment into action against a Japanese position. Throughout the day he lay in an exposed position, constantly fired upon, returning at night with valuable information. On Jan. 19 he made another attack, carried out personal reconnaissance along and about a bare ridge, and deliberately drew the enemy fire to discover their positions.

On the 20th he volunteered to lead yet another attack, and while standing up directing his men he was mortally wounded. Lt. Horwood, who was 30, won the D.C.M. in France, where he was taken prisoner but escaped and reached Dunkirk.



Havildar GAJE GHALE

Of 5th Royal Gurkha Rifles, Havildar Ghale (above) commanding a platoon ordered to take an important point in the Chin Hills, Burma, was wounded in the arm, chest and leg, but led his men forward in furious assaults, stormed the enemy position and held it until it was consolidated. Havildar Ghale received his V.C. decoration from Lord Wavell, Viceroy of India, at Delhi Fort, on Jan. 1, 1944.

Sgt. THOMAS C. DERRICK

His V.C. was awarded for "outstanding leadership and devotion to duty" during the final assault by Australian troops on Sattelberg, New Guinea, in Nov. 1943, when he was in charge of a platoon attacking a Japanese position. Ordered to withdraw, Sgt. Derrick (left) begged a last attempt to take the position. Heading his men, he hurled grenades, drove the enemy out and enabled the company to gain a firm hold. Alone he destroyed 10 enemy posts.

Actg. Major W. P. SIDNEY

On the night of Feb. 7-8, 1944, Major Sidney (right) commanding a support company of a Grenadier Guards battalion in the Carroceto-Buono Riposo Ridge area of the Anzio beachhead (see illus. pp. 688-689) won his V.C. for leading an attack against German infiltration, fighting single-handed, and although wounded holding on until the position was restored.

Photos, British, Australian, Canadian and Indian Official; P.N.A. and G.P.U

I WAS THERE! Eye Witness Stories of the War

With the 'Bats o' Hell' I Flew to Los Negros

Landing was made on Los Negros Island, in the Admiralties, on Feb. 29, 1944, and its capture was announced on March 8. Dickson Brown, News Chronicle war correspondent, who accompanied the air-cover bombers, wrote this vivid dispatch from the most advanced fighter and bomber airfield in New Guinea after six hours' successful flying.

IN torrential rain today I descended in a jeep the precipitous track from the commanding officer's newly erected hilltop shack to this, the most advanced fighter and bomber airfield in New Guinea. I was to join a mission of Mitchell medium bombers which had been ordered to cover the landing in the Admiralty Islands of the American First Cavalry Division (Dismounted).

The territory was not new to the American fliers. They had been several times to the Admiralties, bombing and strafing, during the past fortnight. At the usual briefing of the men detailed instructions were given, as this was the unit's first co-ordinated mission involving the covering of naval and landing operations.

The flight leader was youthful Lt. Richard Reinbold, from Newark, Ohio, who explained the mission, the landing points, and so on. In his final chat he said: "Boys, the weather's as bad as it can be, but we've got to make it. This morning we're accompanied by a war correspondent, and this fellow is British. I want you to show him what the Bats o' Hell can do when they get going!"

ANOTHER SHOCK FOR THE JAPANESE came from these U.S. troops (left) as they landed on Los Negros Island, Admiralty group, on Feb. 29, 1944. Map shows position of the Admiralty Islands in relation to other operational spheres.

"Bats o' Hell" is the unit's nickname, scribbled across the noses of its aircraft. Our target, pin-pointed on the map, is Los Negros, in the eastern Admiralties, and we are to bomb and strafe the area immediately in advance of the point at which the troops are to be landed. That is at least 400 miles from the take-off.

Two hours' fast flying through alternating heavy shower clouds and bright sunshine finds us nearing the islands, and I pick out the remnants of a smokescreen—probably the result of a naval shelling on the Los Negros shore. Unlike the landings on Arawe, New Britain, on December 15, and Cape Gloucester on December 26, there is no sign of heavy landing craft. This time faster moving destroyer craft are being used.

Speed is essential to success, owing to MacArthur's and Kenney's desire to take full advantage of the apparent lack of Japanese aircraft and warships in this theatre. Reinbold comes low, circles around the proposed landing point and has a look for Japs.

Then we climb 2,000 ft. and prepare to make a run on the selected strip to get the full benefit of the eight guns in our nose. We swoop fast to tree-top height, and the guns send streams of lead along the path. Then we make a second run as the navigator reports he has spotted a machine-gun post. Down we come. There is more strafing, and three 500-pounders drop around the machine-gun nest.

Our turret gunner, observing the result, says the thing has disappeared. We keep on circling low, watching the destroyers disgorge the troops into small boats which then make shoreward. Everything seems to be moving smoothly. The landing point is immediately north of Momote airfield, on Los Negros Island.

This airfield is small and probably unusable at present by modern aircraft. But I noticed several small shacks which had hitherto been "installations," but which now were mangled ruins, and a Jap bomber in pieces at the end of the runway. Although I kept my eyes skinned for Japs, I saw none. But the communiqué reports light resistance, which was quickly overcome, and a sharp counter-attack on the airstrip, which was also repulsed with negligible losses. During the whole mission there has been no sign of Japanese aircraft or surface vessel.

Apparently, as on many similar occasions in the past, the Japs have been entirely hoodwinked, believing the Allies would attack Wewak or other parts of the New Guinea coast rather than the Admiralties, as reconnaissance has reported a gradual building up of aircraft in those areas.

Reinbold makes a last circle and sets course for home. "Sorry there wasn't more fun," he says, "but I guess it's good that the Japs appear to be on the run." Back in the mess hall, after six hours' flying, our crew of six drink to the day when the Mitchell "Bats o' Hell" get over Tokyo.

Gen. DOUGLAS MacARTHUR, Supreme Commander in the S.W. Pacific (left), personally directed the Los Negros landing (story in this page). With him are Lt.-Gen. W. Krueger, U.S. 6th Army commander, and Vice-Adm. Kinkaid, commander of Allied naval forces. *Keystone*

I Saw a Japanese Legend Die in Burma Jungle

"Looks tame enough, doesn't he? All the same, a vicious type!" The speaker was a British officer, the object of his remarks a Japanese prisoner bowing low and grinning obsequiously. This surprising prison-camp story comes from Graham Stanford, Daily Mail correspondent on the Arakan front.

IN barbed-wire enclosed pens, guarded by stocky Gurkha sentries, I saw today a group of prisoners from General Tannabashi's army. It was a surprising experience. There were nearly 30 of them, all but one—the only silent member—only too ready to talk of their sufferings and terror under intensive R.A.F. bombing in the jungle.

Since this war began we have heard a good deal about the super Jap. But here was a group of very cowed little men, demoralized, bitter against their commander, talkative—and far from thoughts of hara-kiri. They tell us resentfully that when they went into battle they believed they had air supremacy, but they seldom saw their own planes.

Hungry, wounded, and generally battle-weary, they poured out their hearts to the British troops around them without reserve. One of them recognized a British officer as a one-time patron of his café in a Japanese city. He and most of the prisoners expressed decided opinions about their "crack" commander Tannabashi, who launched this offensive with the intention of driving the Fourteenth Army into the Bay of Bengal.

They hated Tannabashi. They said he was a fat, overbearing man, a stickler for discipline who gave his troops no consideration. They were sent into battle with short rations. They were hungry all the time and many were sick. And all the time there was the bombing. They had no loyalty to Tannabashi, and pretended none. Not one of these malaria-ridden, ragged troops bore any resemblance to the legendary Jap superman who, it is said, even when captured, retains his dignity and arrogance.

These half-starved men bowed low when British officers approached, and grinned quickly back if they saw one of their captors smile. They were obsequious, only too ready to please. As soon as one was captured he asked, "Well, when do I start to work for you?" Another said he would like a job acting as interpreter. Two were appointed orderlies to their wounded comrades and today they were cheerfully working under the supervision of the British doctor.

JAPANESE PRISONERS brought in for interrogation on the Burma front. At the commencement of Japan's bid for power few prisoners were taken by the Allies: the enemy's "religion" proclaimed it a disgrace to be captured alive. Now, both in the Pacific and Burma, that idea has undergone a fundamental change, as revealed in the accompanying narrative. *Photo, Indian Official*

I saw them have their food. They tore into large platefuls of rice, and said that it was the first real meal they had had since the battle started. Some had even been reduced to eating monkeys.

The more intelligent of the prisoners discoursed quite readily on the war—one expressed the view that Japan knew now that she stood alone; that it was only a matter of time before Germany was out of the war. Even so, he insisted that it would be three years before his country was beaten.

The first Japs captured in the Pacific theatre tried hara-kiri. If they failed, they closed their mouths. But these men made no effort to join their ancestors. They shuffled about their compound in all humility. One in particular bowed low every time he was addressed.

"Looks tame, doesn't he?" said a British officer, as the Jap's face wreathed in a smile to reveal a row of broken, discoloured teeth. "All the same, a vicious type. This is how they get these days when they're captured."

Last Voyage of Armed Merchantman Breconshire

For 19 months the 10,000-ton Breconshire had ferried supplies from Alexandria to Malta. On March 20, 1942, carrying fuel oil and aviation spirit, she set out on what was to be her final adventure. The great story of her sensational last hours is here condensed from a recent broadcast by Petty Officer A. Francis-Smith, by courtesy of the B.B.C.

At last Malta came in view through the mist, six miles away, and we felt that our job was almost finished. But hardly had the protecting Hurricanes left us when three Messerschmitts, flying at mast height, appeared and dropped bombs. One of them penetrated our engine-room and put the ship completely out of action. We took the tragedy with a smile, and commenced to lower the collision mat over the hole and sent signals for help, floundering the while in very heavy seas, lying helpless, a sitting target for this determined enemy. Our guns were now constantly in action as waves of bombers continued to attack us. Ammunition was running short, and what did remain above water was distributed to the guns.

Some of the bombs had sprung the plates, and the oil from the tanks made a thick film on the surface of the water. The auxiliary dynamo was put out of action, and all mess decks, food stores, and refrigerators were under water, thus limiting our food supplies. We were without light and means of cooking. Two of the crew, however, got a small forge and, with coal from the cargo, boiled eggs, meat and vegetable hash. We didn't worry if the tea was made with the water in which the eggs had been boiled.

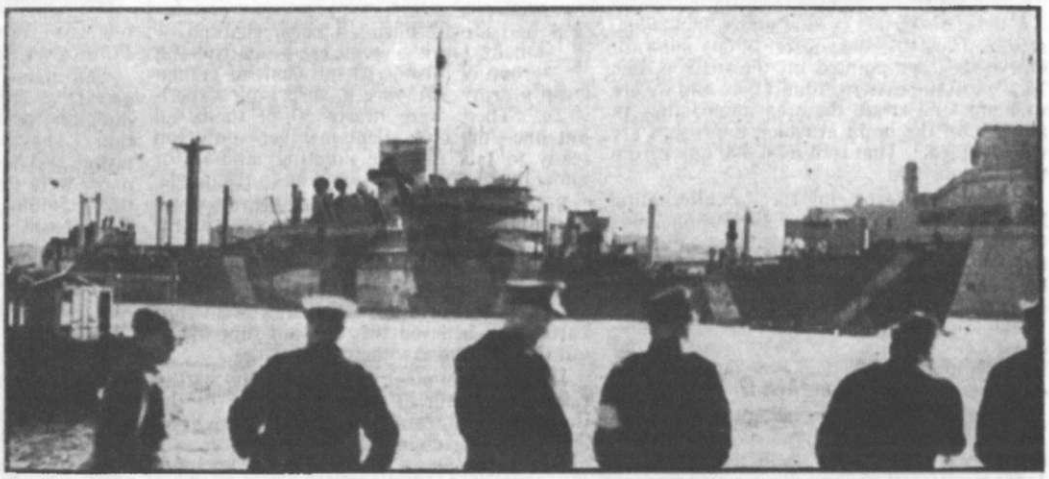
At last, in the distance, pitching on heavy seas, came the cruiser Penelope. We managed to get a large steel hawser aboard. This was rather a feat, as our winches were out of action. She commenced to tow, but the heavy weather and the additional weight of the ship broke the hawser and damaged the cruiser. The Penelope returned to Grand Harbour, leaving us drifting shorewards. We dropped both port and starboard anchors and sat there waiting—waiting to make harbour or meet our doom.

We passed a quiet night, mostly in talk and sleep. Speculations of success or failure—how long it would take for repairs . . . Tuesday morning dawned cheerless. Our water was almost exhausted and breakfast was cold tinned fish and army biscuits—but how we enjoyed it! The day was spent in getting ready to receive tugs that were coming out that night in an endeavour to tow us to safety. The enemy still attacked us during the day, but with small formations.

The next morning, Wednesday, the tug Ancient, with Capt. Nicholls of the Penelope in command, took charge and we commenced to move. Ropes broke and were replaced, and we moved slowly but surely towards safety. This fact added enthusiasm and heart to the then very tired officers and men. Slowly we moved round Delimara Point into Kalafrana Bay and moored to a buoy. Later that afternoon 16 Stuka bombers attacked us; we damaged a number, but they scored near misses which opened up more plates on our side, causing a list to port.

The German air force decided to make a last determined effort to complete our destruction and sent thirty Ju 88s to finish us off. These aircraft aimed and dropped more than 120 bombs, only one of which hit us, in the after-hold, which set us on fire, and a near miss exploded alongside and opened up the ship. Yet there's always something to cause a laugh—in this particular case, the guns' crews near the hold were covered in coal, wheat and condensed milk, which shook them considerably but gave the rest of us a real good laugh.

We managed to get the fire under control, but next morning she turned over on her side and sank, leaving about eight feet of hull sticking up above the water. Immediately salvage operations were begun. Holes were drilled in the side, and 5,000 tons of fuel oil was pumped out—1,000 tons of which enabled the damaged Penelope, who was dependent on us for this oil, to make a dash for Gibraltar and then America, where she was repaired. Salvage operations continued until the remains of the serviceable cargo had been delivered to their destination—Malta!



H.M.S. BRECONSHIRE, 10,000-TON MERCHANT SHIP converted to an anti-aircraft armed merchantman, played a grand part in the defence of Malta. To the very end she managed to "deliver the goods," and part of her thrilling story is told here. Above, the Breconshire, in wartime camouflage, is seen on one of her earlier voyages, arriving in Malta's Grand Harbour with troop reinforcements. *Photo, British Official*

On a Mine-Laying Raid with a Polish Squadron

The heavily loaded Wellington flashes over tumbled seas on one of those dangerous missions whose successful completion is summarized in news broadcasts as "Mines were laid in enemy waters." This operational account by a Polish correspondent is the story behind the familiar phrase.

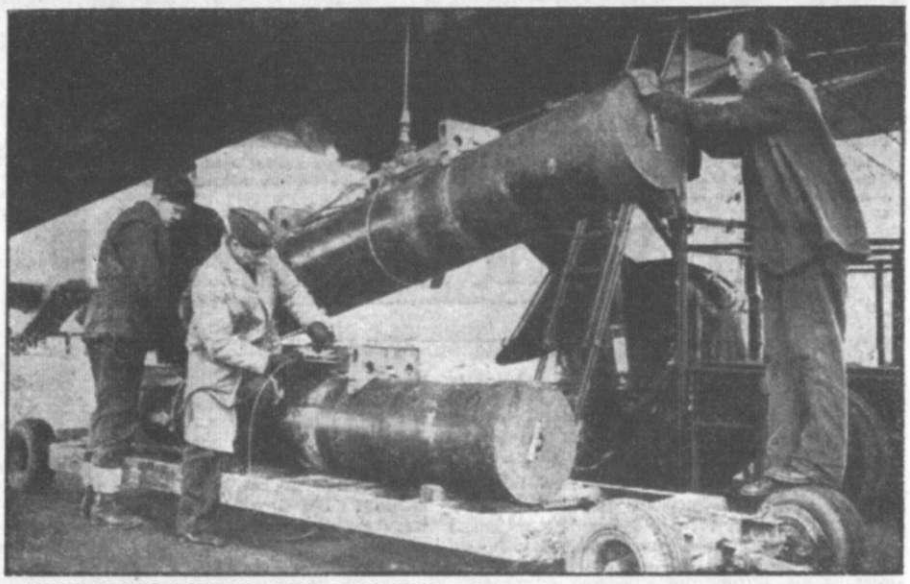
I STOOD glancing down for a sign of enemy shipping, but there was none to be seen. It was silent inside the plane, the crew busy keeping the course and watching the sea. Presently the pilot's voice came through: "Attention! Going down!" The speed increased. Far below three or four lights winked—lighter buoys, perhaps. The dim shape of land could be seen. Flying low, we drove straight over an enemy port. The ground had now come to life and was preparing a lively welcome for us with searchlights and A.A. fire.

Far to right and left lights flashed, as though announcing the arrival of the Wellington. It seemed as though the black land were waiting to swallow us up. Fire was coming up from the flak-ships below. We seemed in a tight spot and I could not help wondering what was going to happen next. Suddenly the plane was flooded with a bright glare from nose to tail. For a minute we were blinded. I thought a searchlight had got to us, but no; it was bursting A.A. shells from the shore batteries.

The pilot dived sharply, out of range, but they were still after us. Shells burst all around. The Wellington pushed stubbornly on to the target. There was no time for fear; I could only admire the Polish crew who flew straight down that lane of fire to prevent the movement of German shipping by dropping their mines in exactly the position indicated. A sharp order through the intercom. and the plane lifted slightly.

The mines were away! A sharp turn and we were speeding back the way we had come. They lost us as we turned, but the flak was still very heavy. Another dive and we were out of it. Not until then did we realize what a blaze of light the Germans had made in the Wellington's honour. The coast was like a rainbow.

We flew in curves close to the surface. The fire and searchlights disappeared from sight. The nearer we drew to England, the worse became the weather; we were flying through cloud again and kept on until we came to the coast. We spotted the dark line of cliffs. We began to talk, and drink our coffee. Suddenly the weather cleared and we could see a number of outward-bound planes. They called us from below, giving the order in which we were to land. We turned, and followed a lane of flickering light. We rolled towards the place from which we had set out six hours before . . . The next morning I heard that while I had been out on the raid my flat in London had been bombed!



MINES BEING LOADED INTO THIS STIRLING are for the obstruction—or destruction—of hostile shipping. During March 1944, Bomber Command aircraft laid mines in enemy waters on 14 nights. These operations—one is described in this page—are carried out in accordance with carefully laid plans, and in strictly defined areas only. *Photo, Sport & General*

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

MARCH 29, Wednesday *1,670th day*

Russian Front.—Link-up of troops of the 1st and 2nd Ukrainian Fronts announced. Kolomyja in Carpathian foothills captured by 1st Ukrainian Army. River Pruth forced by troops under Marshal Koniev.

Burma.—Announced reverse suffered by 14th Army in Ukhrul sector of Manipur.

Pacific.—Palau Islands, in the Carolines, attacked by U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Air.—Brunswick raided in daylight by escorted Fortresses and Liberators.

MARCH 30, Thursday *1,671st day*

Mediterranean.—Sofia rail yards (Bulgaria) attacked by Fortresses and Liberators based on Italy.

Russian Front.—Cernauti, regional centre of the Ukraine and economic centre of N. Bukovina, stormed and captured. Storozhinets and Lipkani taken.

Australasia.—Japanese air base of Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea, heavily raided.

Air.—Great night attack on Nuremberg by Lancasters and Halifaxes; 94 Allied planes lost.

MARCH 31, Friday *1,672nd day*

Russian Front.—Ochakov, 40 miles E. of Odessa, captured by Gen. Malinovsky's 3rd Ukrainian Army.

Australasia.—Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea, attacked; 189 Japanese planes destroyed in this and previous raid.

Pacific.—Wolfi Islands (Carolines) attacked by U.S. Pacific Fleet.

APRIL 1, Saturday *1,673rd day*

Italy.—Capture of Monte Marrone, 14 miles N.E. of Cassino, announced.

Russian Front.—Podhajce, 28 miles S.W. of Tarnopol, captured by Red Army. Marshal Zhukov's 1st Ukrainian Army reached Yablonica Pass.

Australasia.—Ndrilo and Koruniat Islands in Admiralties taken by U.S. troops.

General.—Announced that Maj.-Gen. O. C. Wingate, D.S.O., commander of British forces behind Japanese lines in Burma killed in plane mishap on March 24.

APRIL 2, Sunday *1,674th day*

Mediterranean.—Steyr (Austria) ball-bearing factories attacked by U.S. bombers.

Russian Front.—Announced that troops of the 2nd Ukrainian Front had entered Rumania at several points.

Air.—Announced that 9,100 aircraft were produced in March by the U.S.A.

APRIL 3, Monday *1,675th day*

Mediterranean Front.—Budapest, Hungarian capital, bombed for first time since Sept. 1942 by Fortresses and Liberators. At night, Wellingtons and Liberators raided the city.

Sea.—German battleship Tirpitz, in Alten Fjord, N. Norway, attacked by escorted Barracuda dive-bombers of the Fleet Air Arm; 16 direct hits obtained.

APRIL 4, Tuesday *1,676th day*

Mediterranean.—Bucharest, Rumanian capital, raided by American bombers.

Russian Front.—Germans trapped in Skala area defeated in their attempts to break out. Russians occupied most of Tarnopol.

APRIL 5, Wednesday *1,677th day*

Mediterranean.—Ploesti oilfields raided by large American bomber force.

Russian Front.—Razdelnaya, junction on main railway from Odessa to the west, captured by Gen. Malinovsky's 3rd Ukrainian Army.

Burma.—Announced that Japanese held 15-mile stretch of Imphal-Kohima road, 40 miles inside India.

Air.—Toulouse aircraft factories attacked by Lancasters at night.

APRIL 6, Thursday *1,678th day*

Russian Front.—Gen. Malinovsky's troops reached a point 13 miles N.E. of Odessa.

Australasia.—Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea, heavily raided by Allied bombers.

Air.—Hamburg bombed by Mosquitoes at night.

APRIL 7, Friday *1,679th day*

Russian Front.—Desperate German attempts to break out in Tarnopol and Skala areas smashed. More enemy troops surrounded near Razdelnaya.

Burma.—Capture of the eastern tunnel on the Maungdaw-Buthidaung road by the 14th Army announced.

APRIL 8, Saturday *1,680th day*

Russian Front.—Announced that Red Army had reached the Czechoslovakian frontier. Czechoslovak Govt. in exile summoned people to rise against Germans. Sereth, 21 miles N.E. of Cernauti, Botsani and Doroka, 50 miles W. of Rumanian frontier, occupied. German "pocket" at Razdelnaya liquidated.

Air.—Brunswick and aerodromes N. of the Ruhr attacked by Fortresses and Liberators.

APRIL 9, Sunday *1,681st day*

Russian Front.—Announced that Marshals Zhukov and Koniev in co-ordination had cleared province of Bukovina of the enemy. Front of 180 miles from Yablonica Pass to a point 50 miles N.W. of Jassy established by combined armies.

Burma.—Evacuation of Tamu, in the Kabaw Valley, by 14th Army announced.

Air.—Poznan, Gdynia (Poland), Marienburg (E. Prussia), Tutow and Warnemunde (Germany), attacked by escorted Fortresses and Liberators. Hasselt (Belgium) rail objectives bombed. Lille (N. France) and Villeneuve St.-Georges (near Paris) raided by Lancasters, Stirlings and Halifaxes.

APRIL 10, Monday *1,682nd day*

Russian Front.—Odessa, important political and economic centre of the Soviet Union, and great Black Sea naval base, captured by troops of the 3rd Ukrainian Front. Revealed that offensive against the Crimea recently launched by Gen. Tolbukhin's 4th Ukrainian Army group; Armyansk taken.

Sea.—Announced two Japanese blockade-runners sunk in Indian Ocean.

Air.—Rail yards and depots at Ghent, Tours, Tergnier, Aulnoye and Laon, heavily attacked at night; 3,600 tons of bombs dropped in record raid. Mosquitoes bombed Hanover.

APRIL 11, Tuesday *1,683rd day*

Russian Front.—Announced that Gen. Tolbukhin's troops in the Crimea had crossed the Siwash Sea and captured the important rail junction of Zhankoi. Troops of the Maritime Front under Gen. Eremenko seized Kerch. Germans recaptured Buczacz, relieving troops trapped in Skala area.

Pacific.—Capture by Allies of Ailuk, Likiep, Rongelap, and Utrik atolls announced.

Air.—Oschersleben, Bernberg, Rostock and Arnimswalde raided by over 1,600 American aircraft.

★ Flash-backs ★

1940

April 9. *Germans occupied Copenhagen and Oslo; landings were made at Narvik, Bergen, Trondhjem and Stavanger.*

1941

March 29. *Diredawa (Abyssinia) occupied by South Africans under Gen. Cunningham.*

April 9. *Salonika (Greece) captured by German motorized forces after fierce fighting.*

1942

April 3. *Mandalay, in Central Burma, set on fire by Japanese bombers; 2,000 people killed.*

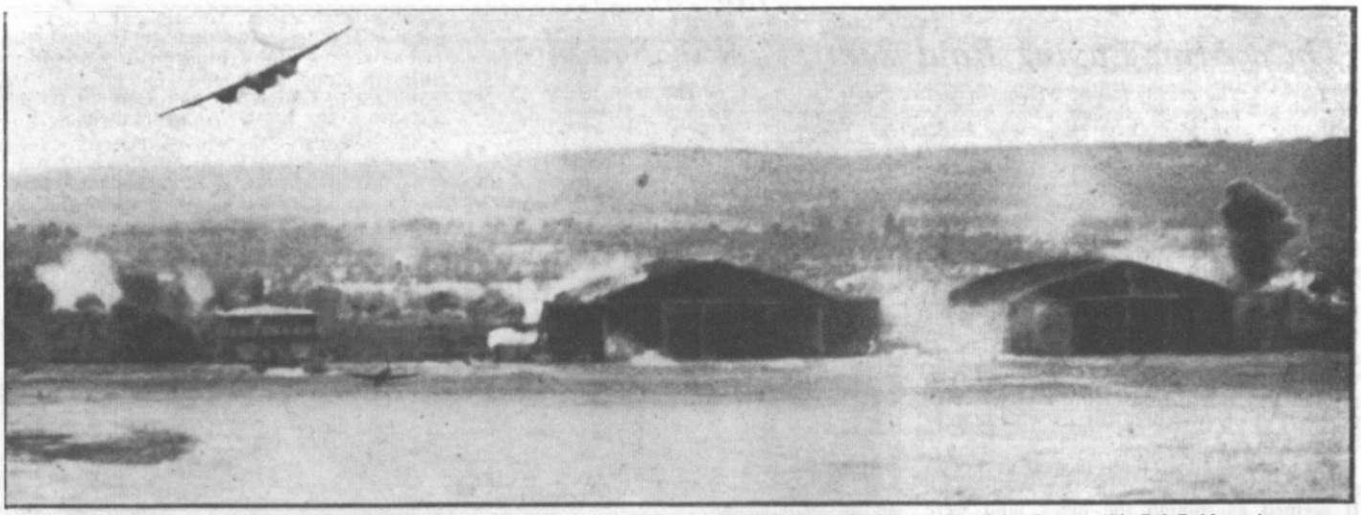
1943

March 29. *Gabès and El Hamma taken by Gen. Montgomery's 8th Army in Tunisia.*

April 7. *Rommel's defences along Wadi Akarit broken by 8th Army. Contact made with U.S. troops at El Guettar by forward 8th Army troops.*

April 10. *8th Army occupied Tunisian port of Sfax.*

April 11. *British 1st Army captured Kairouan. Contact established with 8th Army near Fondouk, which fell April 9.*



BOMB DOORS STILL OPEN after releasing its load during a recent raid on an airfield at Gael, near St. Malo, France, this R.A.F. Mosquito veers away from the scene of its successful attack. Claimed to be the most versatile aircraft in service anywhere in the world, the Mosquito has now been adapted to carry a 4,000-lb. bomb.
Photo, British Official

THE WAR IN THE AIR

by Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

As the war in the air increases in ferocity the facts associated with it become more difficult to comprehend unless one maintains the closest possible watch over every aspect of this branch of military power. Those with reactionary outlook, who dislike to see the older Services displaced in any degree by the newer Service of the air, seize quickly enough upon any apparently adverse effect of air action and say with emphasis that air power is overrated and that it is merely an auxiliary to the Army and Navy. Now the air can, of course, be used as an auxiliary to the older Services, and it can also be employed as an independent arm of war; in either case it can fail if it is used wrongly or over-optimistically. Did not the Luftwaffe fail in its independent attempt to defeat Britain in 1940? Did not the Allied air forces fail to dislodge the German troops from Cassino on March 15, 1944? Can Bomber Command continue to afford such heavy losses as those incurred when in the attacks on Leipzig on February 20, Berlin on March 24, and Nuremberg on March 30, 1944, the aircraft that failed to return numbered 79, 73 and 94 respectively? Do not these air facts disclose that offensive air power is meeting its match in the air and on the ground? Has too much been expected from the air and must we reorientate our views?

All these conflicting elements of evidence of the value of air power need sorting out. They cannot be measured without something to measure them by. Bomber Command's attacks on German towns are measured against the result of the Luftwaffe raid on Coventry on November 14, 1940. Coventry was a target which we knew. It was the object of one isolated large-scale (for those days) attack. The number of bombers used against it was assessed accurately. The weight of bombs that fell on the Midlands town was known within a small margin of error. So in that one foul night the Luftwaffe generals, believing that they were defeating Britain, were, in fact, preparing the yardstick by which their own ultimate defeat was to be measured.

Judged by the measuring scale of Coventry there is no doubt about the effectiveness of the independent air attacks against German towns, although there may, indeed, must be changes in the relative weight of bombs required to destroy any one square mile of built-up area. For in Europe one urban area is not identical with another. Medieval and subsequent town-planners made great variations in the densities of their built-up areas, due in many cases to the war needs of the time at which places were built, or to the commercial transport aspect then appertaining. But already sufficient evidence has been accumulated to make it possible to state with sufficient accuracy what weight of bombs will be required to destroy any given town to such an extent that its value as a war centre to Germany becomes negative.

Assessing Damage Inflicted on the Enemy by Air Attack

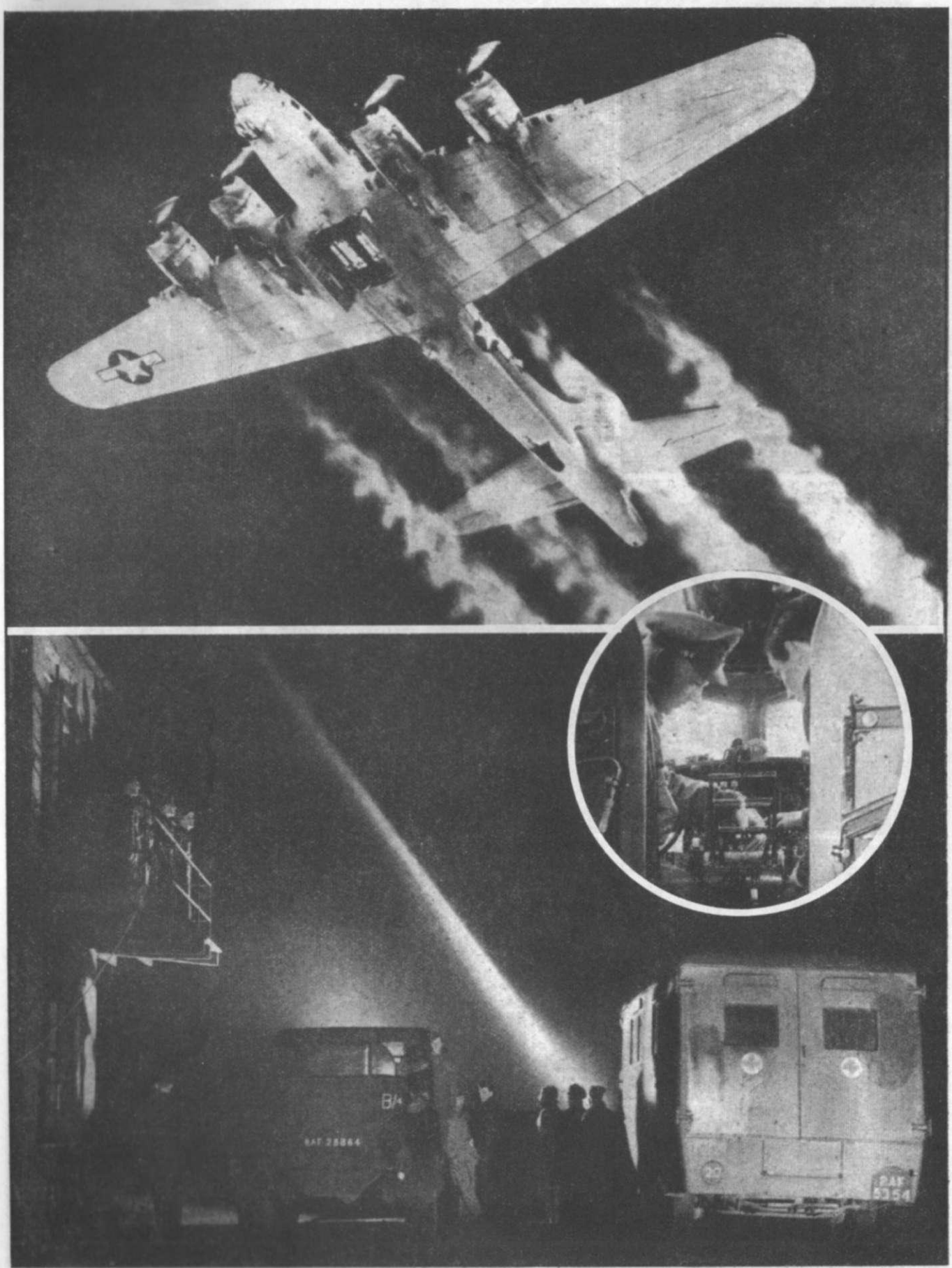
What is not yet fully known is how long it will take for this method of total war attack to make the whole war edifice of the enemy crumble so that he is no longer able to maintain the effort required to oppose the will of the nations arrayed against him. It is probable that it will not be possible fully to estimate this until the war has ended and direct evidence is forthcoming from those in Germany whose tongues and pens are at present unable to say and write what they know. Nor indeed, until that time, will it be possible for the people of Britain to know the full effect of the German air assault on them, for undoubtedly there is much which is still undisclosed even of the 1940-41 assault against us.

Without the remarkable development of air photography, and the possession of long-range, very swift, photographic reconnaissance aircraft which can appear over a target and photograph it from a great height before any enemy aircraft can get up to drive them off, it would be impossible to assess the actual damage inflicted by independent air attack. But with this asset of the camera and the stereoscopic method of examination of air photographs which was first developed for peaceful aerial survey and mapping organizations it is impossible for the enemy to hide the result of bomb damage on urban areas. But it still requires older methods of intelligence to find out what the enemy has done to counter the effect of the attacks—what he has done for the evacuation of the civil population, for the reconstruction of factories destroyed or damaged, how far he has been able to salvage useful materials or tools for use elsewhere, and where the people and materials have been removed for re-employment. And the psychological effect of the attacks on the civil population and on their will to maintain the struggle is a factor of immense importance, and will have a great bearing on the rapidity with which the enemy structure collapses, despite all statements that the attacks are directed (as they are) to the destruction of the enemy's power to produce physically the weapons of war. Victory is won when the will of one side crumbles before the will of the opposing side. Victory is spiritual not material, and nothing that anyone can say can alter that. The alternative to defeat may be death, but death is not defeat. And it is because of this psychological factor that the air attacks upon German towns constitute a great but at present unassessable feature of the war. How much is it playing and how much has it played in the retreat of the Germans in Russia? There are those who say its contribution in those bloody fields is enormous.

Thus the losses of Bomber Command, rising occasionally to high figures, and percentages greater than the average, should not cause undue alarm. It is the average that counts, and that average has kept around four per cent for a long time, and was lower in March than in a lengthy period preceding that month. Nevertheless, these occasional high losses indicate that there are conditions when the German night defences prove themselves to be more formidable than usual, probably due to a combination of suitable visibility, weather handicaps for the bombers, increasing offensive fire-power on the part of night fighters, and the employment of larger numbers of these defence aircraft.

The failure of the bombers to defeat the enemy at Cassino in one blow after the ground forces had tried unsuccessfully for many weeks to capture the town is but an incident in a great war. It is and must always be possible to find terrain where no form of weapon can destroy the enemy there dug in except the primitive method of man against man. War then returns to the war of siege. The use of the bomber for direct assault is then probably an incorrect application of air power, and quicker (even if to begin with apparently more protracted) results may be gained by siege warfare, using the bombers to isolate the force and starve it out. But if the direct method is to be used it must be borne in mind that all through this war the tendency has been to underestimate the weight of bombs required to achieve any given result, and that the estimate first thought of in every case may be wrong through underestimation. In the battle of Germany the crucial factor is now the capacity of the enemy to maintain his fighter strength; we shall make a cardinal mistake if we underestimate that. Bomber Command losses give the best evidence; they are more important than the Cassino stoppage.

Allied Air Arm Stretches Far Over the Reich



ROUND-THE-CLOCK BLOWS by the R.A.F. and U.S.A.A.F. bombers steadily wear down the German war machine. Co-operation is the keynote; a U.S. Fortress captain (inset) explains the controls to a visiting R.A.F. Lancaster pilot. A Fortress with open bomb doors (top) just before its load crashed down on Hitler's domain. R.A.F. station commander and officers watch from the control tower (below) for planes returning from the great raid on Nuremberg by Lancasters and Halifaxes on the night of March 30-31, 1944.

Photos, British and U.S. Official, Barratt's

Up and Down with Our Parachute Troops

READY FOR THE BREATH-SNATCHING DROP is this parachute trooper (1). With his comrades he listens to a detailed briefing (2) before entering a plane bound for "enemy" territory during a rehearsal in Britain. The pilot warns them that they are near to the dropping zone (3); one by one they perch on the brink (4), eyes directed at the signal-light overhead, before leaving the aircraft (5). Down to earth, and in a minute or so he and the others will be ready for action (6).

Photos, Keystone

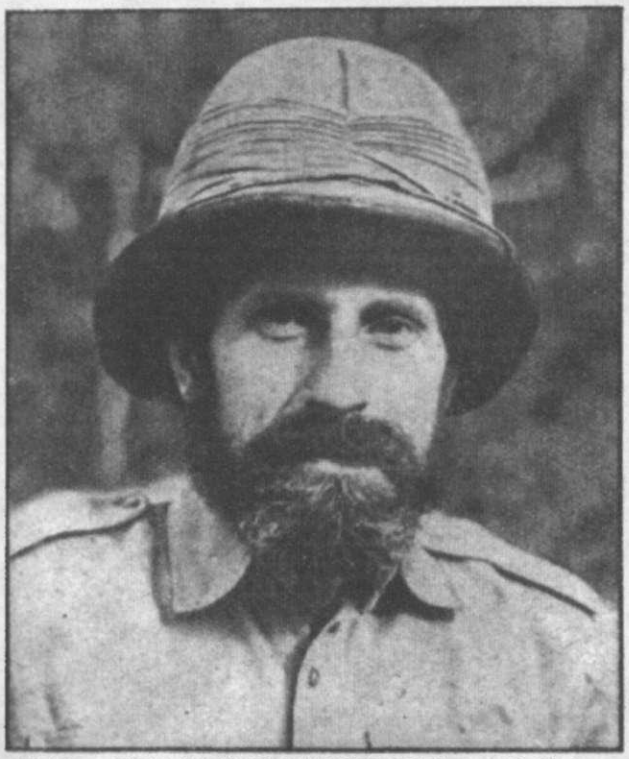
Editor's Postscript

AMERICA does everything on a larger scale than other countries. Therefore it is not surprising to hear that 300 million pounds (not dollars) is being spent yearly in the various Black Markets which have sprung up there since rationing began. One-twentieth part of the petrol purchased is handed over without any coupons changing hands, so an official of the Office of Price Administration asserts, adding that, if this could be stopped, the regular ration could be made a quarter larger than it is at present. Nearly the same proportion of the nation's food is dealt in by Black Marketeers and their clients. Other things that are being sold on the sly at prices far higher than they are worth are clothes, furniture, refrigerators and car tires. We often hear that democracy has so far been a failure. The reason usually given is that which G. K. Chesterton offered for the failure of Christianity—"it has never been tried." Now that is not true. Many shots have been made at workable democratic systems. Not one has hit the mark. Why? The reason seems to me plain. It is contained in the complaint that everywhere people try to get the better of one another and secure selfish advantage for themselves when they are asked to make little sacrifices for the benefit of the community. There can be no rule of the people by and for the people unless all the people share and share alike willingly, unless community interest prevails over individual gain.

SILVER fox farms were pretty numerous not long ago. I suppose not many of them have survived the war. But why not start a cat farm? This would once have seemed a ridiculous suggestion. Cats were plentiful, far too plentiful. Kittens had to be drowned by the thousand, if not the million, every year. But today, like so many other things, this has been changed completely. Cats have become so scarce that for a quite ordinary kitten you are asked to pay as much as 12s. 6d., while a half-Persian costs a guinea at least. For pedigree Persians and Siamese six to eight guineas is nothing out of the way. And this at a time when there is more work for cats to do than ever before. Mice have increased enormously; rats are a worse pest and peril than they were in the years of peace. Not many cats will tackle a rat, it is true; but on the other hand the mere presence of a cat tends to keep rats away, as it certainly does scare mice, if the cat is active on its feet.

THERE is a well-known hymn which speaks of "knitting severed friendships up where partings are no more." A great many relationships which have never been cut short, because they were unrecognized, have been knitted up by the war. Numbers of people in this country have been made aware of them by young relatives in the Forces who have come from Canada or Australia or New Zealand and have been very glad to look them up. An acquaintance of mine told me the other day she had two cousins of different families staying with her in her small London flat, of whose existence she was ignorant until they appeared on her threshold and announced themselves. In a train the other day I was talking to a Canadian from Saskatchewan, who said what a godsend it had been to him to find he had relations in England and Scotland, who had made him more than welcome. He said this gave him quite a new feeling about "the Old Country," and he knew a great many others were like him. Such meetings, which ripen often into affection, are a very good thing for both the visitors and the hosts. They really do tighten those "bonds of Empire" which are much talked about by politicians, but have not meant a great deal to ordinary folk.

COMPLAINTS reach me sometimes about the slowness of promotion in the Army for men who are said to be doing really exceptionally good work and ought to have larger scope for their initiative and vigour. How far these have any justification it is very hard to judge. One could get at the truth only by close investigation of each individual case. But it is noticeable that some Army officers who are not taking active part in the war manage to go up the ladder of regimental rank with remarkable rapidity. I have been particularly struck by the transformation of M.P.s and others who were captains only a little while ago into majors and colonels. Some who have been at Whitehall all the time, doing useful work, I have no doubt, but not always military work, have attained these two "steps" in a couple of years or so. It would be very interesting to know why. Many members are in favour of military titles being dropped in the House unless they apply to retired officers. Some drop them gradually of their own free will. Mr. Attlee, for example, used to be called Major Attlee, and Mr. Eden Captain Eden.



Maj.-Gen. ORDE CHARLES WINGATE, D.S.O., lost his life in a plane crash in Burma on March 24, 1944, aged 41. Intrepid leader of jungle fighters, he perfected a penetration technique which he had already proved in Abyssinia, and in Burma early in 1943 when he led a raiding column 1,000 miles through Japanese-held territory **(see pp. 46-49).** *Photo, Associated Press*

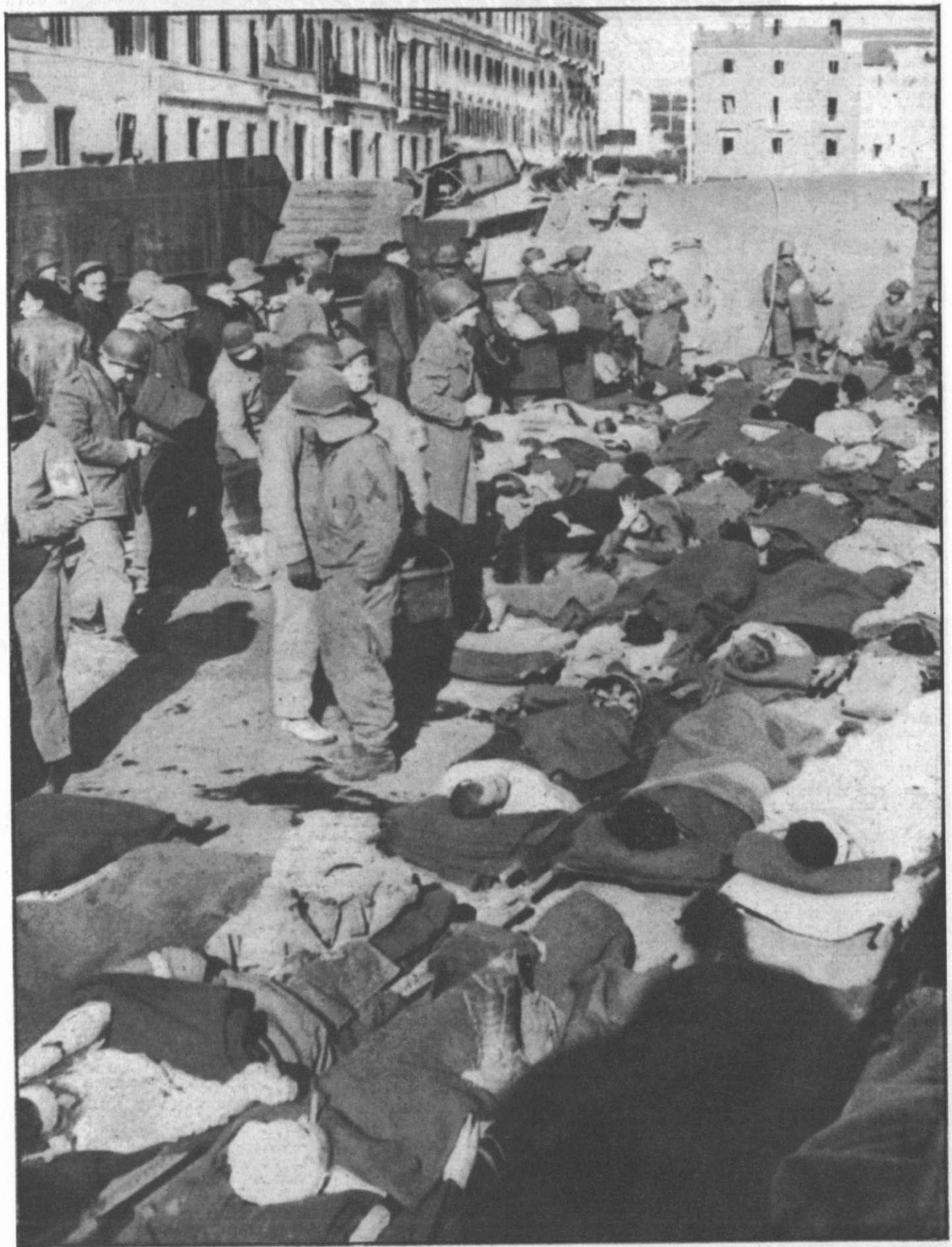
WHAT is it makes most men still dislike the sight of a woman smoking in the street? They don't object to women enjoying a cigarette after dinner in a dining-room or restaurant, nor does smoking by women in a cinema, theatre, or train disturb them. But somehow to see a woman with a cigarette in her mouth in the street does arouse in most men a feeling that it is unbecoming in both senses of that word, that it is out of keeping with the womanly character and that it diminishes the attractiveness of woman. I have been putting these queries to myself after reading the regulations about A.T.S. girls and their cigarettes. Why should it be permissible by Army rule for a soldier to smoke anywhere and forbidden to the service-woman in uniform to do the same? Suppose they are waiting together to go into a cinema: the man may smoke, the woman may not, says the War Office, though inside they both can. I should have said, in spite of the irrational sentiment I have mentioned as affecting the majority of men, that it would have been better to make a rule that all A.T.S. members must have their hair cut short. To see fluffy curls under a service cap, as one does frequently, suggests the comic opera chorus. It is a glaring incongruity.

IT happened in a seaside town. The conductor was hurrying passengers off at a stop. An old lady had some difficulty in getting up from her seat. "Now, come on, missis," the conductor urged. "You need a bit of yeast to help you rise!" She looked at him with scornful dignity. "And if you were given some," she told him, "you would be better bred!"

"JUVENILE delinquency" is an expression often on the lips of those who like long words and enjoy thinking that morals are declining and "boys not what they used to be when I was young." That a good deal of mischief is done by boys is true. Partly that is due to there being fewer policemen about. But there is another, even more potent, cause, and that is adult delinquency. Boys are imitative creatures. Set them a good example (so long as you don't do it in a priggish way) and they will follow it; but let them see their elders stealing and wantonly destroying other people's property, and they are quick to do the same whenever they get the chance. How appalling the increase in these offences has been during the war years is shown by the loss incurred by one railway company alone of as much as £2,000 worth a day from railway carriages. Besides the wrenching off of electric lamps and ripping of cushions, there is perpetual pilfering from freight wagons. I see that a German convicted of stealing from a store where goods intended for public use were kept has been sentenced to death and executed. I also see that railway chiefs are calling for more severe punishment of railway thieves. This will have to come.

ONE of the commonest sights in Russia used to be a man or woman—but usually a man—sitting on a seat in a public park with the ground all about the seat strewn with sunflower seed husks. These were chewed as much by Russians of the poorer classes as gum is by American office-boys. The slightly sweet content of the seed was swallowed and the husk rejected. Everywhere you went you saw sunflowers growing, the huge kind that have never seemed to me to suit British gardens. They were grown not for their appearance but for their seeds. Now it seems the cultivation of this species is to be recommended to agriculturists in this country. They have been studied for some years past by the Science Department at South Kensington, and it is believed they could be grown in South and East England for the production of an edible oil, also useful as a lubricant.

Wounded in Battle for Anzio Beach-head



ROWS OF STRETCHERS, each containing a wounded American soldier of the 5th Army, wait for landing-barges which will transport them to hospital ships outside Anzio port. Medical personnel, some of whom are seen above, do a magnificent job, dealing with each case in the speedy and efficient manner made possible by modern equipment. **See pp. 687 and 755.**

Photo, Keystone

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